

FAMILIES' PROTECTION OF
YOUNG CHILDREN FROM SEXUAL ABUSE
IN KWANZIMAKWE

BY

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ABSTRACT

The research study described and explored families' protection of children from sexual abuse as perceived and experienced by families and community leaders in KwaNzimakwe, KwaZulu-Natal. A social construction and ecosystems perspective was utilised in order to understand the effects of perceptions and socio-cultural factors. The tribal area of KwaNzimakwe provided a context for the study to investigate socio-cultural factors that increase vulnerability among children in post apartheid South Africa. Limited empirical data was however found in relation to locally relevant factors pertinent to families' protection of children from sexual abuse.

The perspective of families and the community was ascertained through the use of qualitative methods of data collection. Ten individual interviews were conducted with family members who had past experiences of child sexual abuse and five focus group discussions were carried out with parents and community leaders.

The research revealed misconceptions in relation to child sexual abuse with regards to (1) the definition (2) detection (3) awareness of potential risks. Child sexual abuse was found to be a hidden issue as families protect their name and the community perceive it to be a private matter. The study also showed that families do not report cases of child sexual abuse due to mistrust in the child protection system.

Other main findings were that insufficiencies in the child protection system and stigma in the community have detrimental effects on families and victims. The absence of men in families and the absence of adults in the lives of children were found to significantly weaken families' protection of children from sexual abuse. The study attributed this to factors such as poverty, gender roles and perceptions of men.

The study recommends further research on the topic and prevention programmes in South Africa with particular reference to strengthening families and community based approaches.

COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES

DECLARATION - PLAGIARISM

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Signed

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

1. 1 Introduction

Child sexual abuse is a social problem that requires attention in South Africa (Collings, 1997; Lalor, 2004; Madu & Peltzer, 2001; Stevens, Tolond, & Collings, 2004). Loffell (2002) and Keeton (2004) refer to child sexual abuse as an increasing problem in Southern Africa and South Africa in particular. Thus there is a need for increased protection of children from sexual abuse within their communities. Herman and Van den Heever (2010) point out that there is need for community interventions in order to keep children safe from sexual abuse in South Africa. Literature from as early as 1984 refers to the need to protect children from sexual abuse within the community (Porter, 1984). Porter describes how the community can (1) fail the child by ignoring the prevalence of sexual abuse or (2) ensure the wellbeing of the child by taking the plight of sexually abused children seriously. This entails families breaking the code of silence and reporting incidences of child sexual abuse (Porter, 1984). It is important to look at families when approaching the issue of protecting children from sexual abuse as families carry the prime responsibility in protecting children from harm in accordance with section 18 of the Children's Act (No.38 of 2005). However, families' responsibility cannot be understood without investigating how the social context influences and determines families' attempts to protect their children from sexual abuse and the way that they respond to child sexual abuse. As Keniston (1977 in Sauna, 1985, p. 847) states, *"Blaming the family for the ills of today's children is a myth because family cannot be separated from society. The entire social ecology defines and limits what parents can do"*. The fact that sexual abuse is escalating in South Africa, in conjunction with the fact that socio-cultural factors in the developing world increases vulnerability in children (Lachman, 2004), significantly shaped the present research.

The present research focused on exploring socio-cultural factors in the family environment that influence families' protection of children from sexual abuse. The study sought to explore these factors in the family environment from a community perspective.

The present research was undertaken in the tribal community of KwaNzimakwe between June and October 2012. KwaNzimakwe is situated 40 kilometres south of Port Shepstone and 10 kilometres north of the border to the Eastern Cape, in Ugu District in KwaZulu-Natal. The justification and possible implications concerning the choice of locale of the study will be discussed later in this chapter.

The aim of the study was to explore the role of families in protecting young children from sexual abuse as experienced and perceived by families and community leaders in KwaNzimakwe. Chapter one presents the background to the study and the statement of the problem in relation to child sexual abuse and factors that render children vulnerable to sexual abuse. Thereafter the rationale for the study will be given, followed by a brief overview of the research methodology and literature. Chapter one concludes with a discussion with regards to the theoretical framework and a preview of the layout of the research report. The limitations of the study and the ethical considerations will be presented in chapter three as this discussion relates to specific methodology that is not covered in depth in this chapter.

1. 2. Background to the study

The researcher currently works for an organisation that supports and equips families of vulnerable children in the community of KwaNzimakwe. A corollary of this is first-hand experience of the increased social problem of child sexual abuse in the community. The motivation behind the study was an attempt to contribute to finding ways of targeting families, in order to prevent/reduce child sexual abuse in the community. Babatsikos (2010) and Lachman (2004) point to the need for bespoke local research on how parents manage and reduce the risk of child sexual abuse. Babatsikos (2010) indicates the possibility that this can help plan preventative practice.

1.3. Statement of the problem

Child sexual abuse is escalating in South Africa (Collings, 1997; Lalor, 2004; Loffell, 2002; Madu & Peltzer, 2001). Keeton (2004) reports that discussions in relation to child sexual abuse were held at the first African Conference on sexual health and

rights which took place in Johannesburg in 2004. One item that was discussed at the conference was concerns regarding child sexual abuse being on the rise, and the fact that the majority of sexual abuse cases go unreported. It is therefore relevant to understand the phenomenon of child sexual abuse being on the rise in Africa in relation to other prominent issues in contemporary development studies. Lachman (2004) relates increased vulnerability to sexual abuse of children in the developing world to the prominence of issues such as poverty, HIV/AIDS and family disruption. Loffell (2002) highlights that insufficient child protection services in South Africa increase children's vulnerability in relation to sexual abuse. Guma and Henda (2004) further point to how cultural differences in definition of various forms of abuse in Southern Africa leads to acceptance of behaviours that contradict The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Ige and Fawole (2011) argue that carers' perception of child sexual abuse influences their willingness to prevent child sexual abuse. Carers' perceptions of child sexual abuse and the way that they protect their child from sexual abuse have also been found to negatively impact the child's ability to self-protect (Ige & Fawole, 2011). Porter (1984, p. 2) states that, *"Sexual abuse occurs in secret, is kept a secret by the family and is being kept a secret by society's attitudes and taboos."* Therefore, the issue child sexual abuse is linked to various socio-cultural factors which influence the families' protection of children, whether it is perceptions of child sexual abuse or cultural norms or challenges in terms of access to child protection services. In view of these explanations, the present research focuses on the socio-cultural factors in families' environment. This focus was chosen to build upon already existing research regarding locally relevant socio-cultural factors.

1.4 Research overall aim, specific objectives and questions

1.4.1 Overall aim

The overall aim of the present research was to explore the role of families in protecting young children from sexual abuse as experienced and perceived by families and community leaders in KwaNzimakwe.

1.4.2 Specific objectives

The specific objectives of the study are:

- To understand perceptions of child sexual abuse held by families and community leaders in KwaNzimakwe.
- To establish how families protect young children from child sexual abuse in KwaNzimakwe.
- To explore how socio-cultural factors influence families protection of young children from sexual abuse in KwaNzimakwe.
- To determine how families in KwaNzimakwe believe their role of protecting young children from sexual abuse can be strengthened.

1.4.3 Research questions

The research questions of the study are:

- What are families'/community leaders' perceptions of child sexual abuse in KwaNzimakwe?
- How do families respond to child sexual abuse in KwaNzimakwe?
- How do families attempt to protect young children from sexual abuse in KwaNzimakwe?
- What hinders and promotes families in protecting their young children from sexual abuse in KwaNzimakwe?
- How do families/community leaders believe that families' protection mechanisms of young children from sexual abuse in KwaNzimakwe can be strengthened?

1.5 Rationale of the study

1.5.1 Significance to social work practice and other social services

As the present research seeks a community perspective on child sexual abuse, it will be profitable to all parties that are involved in actively attempting to prevent and reduce child sexual abuse in the community:

1. It is valuable as it investigates socio-cultural influences on families' protection of children in an underdeveloped area in South Africa, and produces results that are locally relevant to the context in which child sexual abuse is an increasing social problem.
2. It is valuable for social workers and other social service practitioners by providing insight into the socio-cultural factors affecting families' protection of children from sexual abuse. The report can further be used by professionals as a source of information on (1) methods used by families to protect children from sexual abuse and (2) existing gaps in families protection of children from sexual abuse.
3. It is valuable as it suggests practice possibilities for social work practice and other social services regarding preventative work with families in relation to child sexual abuse. The fact that many aspects of the study were exploratory means that the findings pointed to new ways in which to prevent child sexual abuse. This is highly relevant as child sexual abuse is an escalating problem in South Africa. The study provides scope to improve on prevention programmes throughout the country.
4. A core value of the study lies in the fact that it sought the perspective of family members and the community. This provides professionals with a resource to use in order to understand the phenomenon based on experiences and insight in the community. It also means that it is possible for service providers to consult suggestions by the community when developing programmes to prevent child sexual abuse.

1.5.2 Significance to social science research

Townsend and Dawes (2004) describe South African research as limited in relation to child sexual abuse. Larsen, Chapman, and Armstrong (1998) highlight that there is a specific lack of literature regarding child sexual abuse within rural communities in South Africa. The fact that part of the present research is exploratory means that the findings allow scope for further research.

1.6 Rationale for choosing KwaNzimakwe as locale of the study

The reason for choosing to conduct the present research in KwaNzimakwe was not linked to it being a typical or significantly different tribal area in South Africa. The main reason was rather that this area provided the researcher with access to (1) families with past experiences of sexual abuse and (2) community leaders. KwaNzimakwe is an underdeveloped rural area with typical challenges such as high HIV infection rate, high unemployment and challenges in terms of access to services (Hibiscus Coast Municipality, 2012/13). KwaNzimakwe was therefore a suitable locale as it provided a context for the study where factors that are seen to increase vulnerability among children in South Africa and the developing world were present and highly relevant (Lachman, 2004; Loffell, 2002).

1.7 Research approach

The discussion that follows is a summary to provide an early overview of the research methodology used in the study. Details are further explained in chapter three of the research report.

1.7.1 Overall research methodology

Silverman (1997, p. 223) states that, *“Qualitative research techniques, with their capacity for rich descriptions, are favoured techniques for research focused on everyday work practices.”* The present research used qualitative research techniques, as the goal was to guide preventative work with families by securing a wealth of rich data from several sample groups. (Gray, 2009) further points out other

characteristics of qualitative research that correspond with the overall aim and specific objectives of this study. For example, (1) seeking the perceptions of the participants and (2) understanding people's actions. The present research specifically sought participants' perceptions of child sexual abuse in order to understand their actions in relation to child sexual abuse, as well as the participants' own explanations of their actions in relation to child sexual abuse.

The research design contained exploratory elements, as the literature review revealed limited South African research that described and explained families' protection of children from sexual abuse, within the context of disadvantaged communities such as KwaNzimakwe. Durrheim (2008, p. 39) refers to research into "unknown areas" as exploratory. The design also included descriptive elements as it generated different descriptions of how families protect their children from sexual abuse.

1.7.2 Sampling

A range of data sources were used in this study:

1. Family members who had past experiences of child sexual abuse. This entailed selecting 10 family members from 6 families through "critical case sampling" (Kelly, 2008a, p. 382). Exceptional cases were represented in terms of selecting families with varied responses to child sexual abuse. The families were derived from the case history of a community based organisation in KwaNzimakwe. The researcher currently works for this organisation and oversees staff members who work directly with these cases. The staff that work directly with the families selected cases that fitted the above mentioned criteria and initially approached these families regarding participating in the study. The researcher would then interview two family members from the same family, in order to get two perspectives on the same case of past child sexual abuse. The researcher further believed that the organisation's case history included past examples of families that would represent the above mentioned criteria. She did however identify that it could be challenging to interview two family members from each family, as there are sometimes issues and conflicts related to

the incident of sexual abuse. A decision was made to interview one family member in these instances.

2. Fathers and mothers who were willing to discuss child sexual abuse in a group. This entailed selecting 20 parents using “purposive non-probability sampling” (Gray, 2009, p. 180) and through “availability sampling” (Rubin & Babbie, 2011, p. 355). Crèches situated in close proximity to the community based organisation mentioned above were used for sample selection. The supervisor of each crèche was asked to recruit parents of the children, with equal numbers of mothers and fathers. The intention was to conduct two focus groups with 10 fathers in one group and 10 mothers in the other group. The strategy of using the crèches for data collection would be possible as relationships of trust had been established here. There was, however, the possibility of not getting the required number of participants and, as such, groups were made smaller (six to eight members) if this happened. Separating males and females was an intentional choice as this would allow the participants to speak more freely in the group. The choice also referred to the aspect that abuse at times is closely linked to power relations between the genders (Guma & Henda, 2004; Richter & Highson-Smith, 2004).

3. Community leaders who may influence families’ responses to child sexual abuse. The intention was to recruit 10 tribal leaders, 10 church leaders and 10 traditional healers for three focus group interviews through “snow ball sampling” (Gray, 2009, p. 181). This strategy was chosen in order to explore each of their perceptions and experiences of sexual abuse as they were believed to represent influential groups in the community. One tribal leader, one church leader and one traditional healer were initially approached. They were individually asked to participate in the study and then asked to each recruit nine other colleagues who were willing to partake in the focus group. This strategy would accumulate sufficient numbers of participants as good relationships of trust had been established with these stakeholders. There was also the potential to recruit general community members who were willing to discuss child sexual abuse in a group, through a community based organisation. Additional members reflected “availability sampling” (Rubin & Babbie, 2011, p. 355). With limited responses, groups would be smaller in number (six to eight).

1.7.3 Data capturing and instruments

This study used “methodological triangulation” by utilising a variation of data gathering techniques (Gray, 2009, p. 193). This created an opportunity to understand families and child sexual abuse from various perspectives. “Data triangulation” was also applied through the use of a range of sampling strategies and sources (Gray, 2009, p. 193).

The family members with past experiences of child sexual abuse participated in individual interviews, where a semi-structured interview guide was utilised (Appendix A and B). This method was chosen as it is a natural approach, and therefore encourages people to share their personal experiences. Individual interviews allowed the gathering of rich, in-depth data regarding participants’ personal experiences, as it was less inhibiting for participants than a group format in accordance with Kelly (2008b).

Focus group interviews were conducted with fathers and mothers from KwaNzimakwe and with community leaders using a topic guide with probes (Appendix C and D). Focus group methodology has, according to Liamputtong (2011), increased in popularity within cross-cultural and development research due to its collective nature. The group setting assisted the participants to articulate their thoughts and empower them to voice their opinions. Participants were expected to be more likely to share information around a sensitive topic such as child sexual abuse as they would feel safer within a group compared to in a one on one interview (Liamputtong, 2011; Morgan, 1998). Focus groups were also an appropriate tool to use as one intention was to explore perceptions and attitudes (Michell, 1999). The present research employed a less structured approach that allowed participants to interact with each other. This approach was used as it provided an increased opportunity to gain an understanding of the participants’ perspectives (Liamputtong, 2011).

1.7.4 Data analysis

The present research employed interpretative analysis (Terre Blanche, Durrheim, & Kelly, 2008): (1) familiarisation and immersion, (2) inducing themes and coding, (3) elaboration and (4) interpretation and checking. Further details in terms of the procedures in relation to the steps will follow in chapter three.

1.8 Literature pertaining to child sexual abuse

There is a wealth of research and literature available on the topic of sexual abuse. The literature contains a consensus that sexual abuse results from a complex combination of individual, social and environmental influences. The social and environmental influences are referred to as risk factors that make children vulnerable to sexual abuse within their families and their communities (Hobbs & Wynne, 2002; Jewkes, 2004; Townsend & Dawes, 2004).

There is locally relevant literature available in relation to the prevalence and patterns of sexual abuse. There is, however, limited literature and research available regarding social and environmental influences in the context of the developing world in relation to Southern Africa and South Africa in particular. The literature indicates the existence of various typical environmental factors that enhances vulnerability in children, but little empirical data is referred to. The same pattern exists in relation to literature regarding social influences particularly in relation to cultural factors. These factors have been mentioned briefly in this chapter but will be explicated in chapter two.

1.9 Theoretical framework

Social constructionism and an ecosystem approach were found relevant as theory frames in order to gain insight into experiences and perceptions of families in relation to their role in protecting young children from sexual abuse. Ecosystems theory provided a theory frame to understand influences of the environment on the family, whilst the social constructionism perspective provided a tool to gain insight into how families' understandings and actions in relation to child sexual abuse are constructed

through socio-cultural processes (Lock & Strong, 2010; Rogers, 2010). These two approaches were found to be complementary as they provide different perspectives with regards to understanding families within the environment.

1.9.1 Social constructionism

Social Constructionism is based on the assumption that the way humans understand the world is constructed through social interaction. It is through social interaction that humans put together their view of the world and everything in it. Social interaction takes place in daily life, and language is therefore of vital interest within the field of social constructionism (Burr, 2003). Lock and Strong (2010) point out that individuals' experiences, and the way that they make sense of these, are primarily the product of socio-cultural processes. This would mean that families construct the way that they understand child sexual abuse through socio-cultural processes. Human social constructions of the world are culturally and historically determined (Burr, 2003). An example is how the view and understanding of childhood has changed significantly in recent historical times. It is in recent social constructions that the idea has been adopted that children are innocent and in need of protection (Burr, 2003). The researcher sees this as an important reminder that discussions concerning the protection of children from child sexual abuse are relatively recent. Social constructions further bring with them different kinds of human actions. People's views and understanding determine certain behavioural patterns and exclude others. Human social constructions are inseparably linked to power relations as they have implications for what constitutes acceptable and non-acceptable behaviours (Burr, 2003). This has the following implications in terms of understanding families' protection of children from sexual abuse:

1. Families' perception of sexual abuse is an influential factor in relation to the way that families act to protect children from sexual abuse and the way that families respond to child sexual abuse. This is highly relevant as Ige and Fawole (2011) argue that carers' perception of child sexual abuse may influence their willingness to prevent child sexual abuse. Carers' perceptions of child sexual abuse and the way that they protect their child from sexual

abuse have also been found to negatively impact the child in terms of their ability to self-protect (Ige & Fawole, 2011).

2. It is necessary to examine power relations in order to further understand families' perceptions and actions in relation to child sexual abuse. Richter and Highson-Smith (2004) refer to abuse as closely linked to power. An illustration of the role of power relations can be found when Maitse (1997 in Guma & Henda, 2004) highlight that child sexual abuse is connected to sexism in society where men strongly identify with the male sex role and violence against children is socially accepted.

Lock and Strong (2010) are of the opinion that insight into socially constructed knowledge needs to guide practice within various fields that aim to help and assist vulnerable groups. The reason for this is that traditional practices have often seen clients to be in need of information and as passive recipients of professional views and understanding. Qualitative methods are increasingly popular as a reaction to this through gathering information from the clients and letting this information guide practice (Lock & Strong, 2010). The above can, when applied to the present research, be seen to promote seeking the perspective of the community of KwaNzimakwe in order to understand their socially constructed realities. It also promotes the acceptance of these realities to guide preventative practice in relation to child sexual abuse.

1.9.2 Ecosystems theory

“Blaming the family for the ills of today’s children is a myth because family cannot be separated from society. The entire social ecology defines and limits what parents can do” (Keniston, 1977 in Sauna 1985, p.847). Environmental factors can influence families' choices and actions. There are many models that seek to explain the cause of child sexual abuse related to, for example, (1) perpetrator factors, (2) cycles of abuse and (3) family factors (Babatsikos, 2010; Hobbs & Wynne, 2002; Porter, 1984; Townsend & Dawes, 2004). The literature also includes information with regards to individual factors that influence families' responses to child sexual abuse such as

divided loyalty between the perpetrator and the child (Bernard, 2001). Loffell (2002) warns against focusing solely on individual factors and ignoring societal issues that contribute to child sexual abuse. There is a consensus that sexual abuse results from a complex combination of individual, social and environmental influences. The researcher notes that it is not a matter of disagreement within the field but rather variations of research focus. The research focus in terms of this study relate to understanding social and environmental influences. There is a clear consensus that there are complex variations of social and environmental risk factors that make children vulnerable to sexual abuse within their families and their communities (Hobbs & Wynne, 2002; Jewkes, 2004; Townsend & Dawes, 2004).

One way of understanding families' role in protecting their children from sexual abuse is defined and limited by the environment. Ecosystems theory is therefore a relevant theoretical framework as it provides a frame to understand influences within the environment (Rogers, 2010). It is possible to view the family as a micro system surrounded by a meso system, exo system and a macro system (Longres, 2000). The social environment includes social systems such as families, communities, organisations, societies and nations. Families' protection of children from sexual abuse can consequently be seen to be influenced by socio-cultural processes between and within the micro system, the macro system, the exo system and the macro system.

1.9.2.1 The micro system

Vosler (1999) describes the family as a system where individual members influence each other and a system that is influenced by other systems. The way that the family system is influenced by other systems was seen as relevant to the present research due to its aim of understanding socio-cultural influences in families' environment. Family relationships can either provide the individual with a social support network or fail to give support. An important part in supporting a child that has been sexually abused is linked to reporting the incidence of child sexual abuse (Babatsikos, 2010). The family system has defined boundaries in terms of norms, roles and traditions. (Longres, 2000). It is not possible to understand family separate from its function, which is linked to the family systems' maintenance and adaption to the environment

(Longres, 2000). The family function relevant to this study was the responsibility to protect children from harm and, more specifically, from sexual abuse according to section 18 of the Children's Act (No.38 of 2005)

1.9.2.2 The meso system

The meso system is the norm-forming component in the environment where interpersonal relationships take place (Rogers, 2010). This refers to direct relationships between individuals, groups and organisations (Longres, 2000). It includes the neighbourhood as (1) it can be seen as a system within the larger community and (2) it is the social environment where families carry out daily life. The neighbourhood has boundaries that relate to both values and lifestyle. The neighbourhood plays an important role in affecting the wellbeing of individuals and families (Kirst-Ashman, 2008). As such, the neighbourhood plays an important role in families' lives and it can either provide, or fail to provide, a support network for families in protecting their children from sexual abuse. Guma and Henda (2004) describe how parenthood is a broadly shared responsibility in African societies. This responsibility is shared by the biological parents, their relatives and others of a similar age or older. *"The notion of family is understood as an inclusive concept, it is expressed as corporate and embodied phenomenon. In this context parenthood is shared social responsibility."* (Guma & Henda, 2004, p. 102).

1.9.2.3 The exo system

The exo system refers to the community level and includes established norms and standards (Rogers, 2010). The community consists of people who are connected, distinguished as a group and share mutual characteristics. A community can either be distinguished geographically or ideologically. The function of the community is for its members to organise themselves to improve quality of life (Kirst-Ashman, 2008). The community can (1) influence the larger environments and (2) be influenced by the larger environment (Schrivier, 2011). This level further encompasses organisations that can influence families' wellbeing such as the legal system and the social service system (Longres, 2000). Loffell (2002) argues that the responses of

families, in terms of not intervening on behalf of a sexually abused child, is influenced by lack of professional intervention and services in the community. Loffell further highlights insufficiencies in the child protection system in South Africa. The insufficiencies are related to (1) lack of resources in order to carry out quality child protection interventions and (2) the trend of the majority of perpetrators escaping both criminal justice and social service processes (Lofell, 2002).

1.9.2.4 The macro system

The macro system refers to cultural and ideological contexts. The macro system regulates the environment where other systems exist (Rogers, 2010). Richter and Highson-Smith (2004) point out that sexual abuse is strongly linked to culture. The macro system further goes beyond individual interaction and relates to social, economic and political influences (Kirst-Ashman, 2008). It regulates the cultural context and socio-cultural influences on the family (Longres, 2000; Townsend & Dawes, 2004). These influences do, however, overlap between the various systems and it is therefore relevant to explore socio-cultural influences within all systems (Townsend & Dawes, 2004). There are many socio-cultural factors that will be relevant such as poverty and HIV/AIDS, as they influence families' protection of children against sexual abuse (Hobbs & Wynne, 2002; Jewkes, 2004; Lachman, 2004; Lalor, 2004; Mabetoa, 1994; Townsend & Dawes, 2004).

1.9.3 Terminology within ecosystems theory

1.9.3.1 Input and output

Input is the message of information and communication that is received by an individual or a system. Output on the other hand is the individual's or systems' response to the incoming message after it has been processed. It is important to note that it is most often a matter of exchange of messages and responses (Kirst-Ashman, 2008). This is relevant as it means that input in relation to child sexual abuse must be investigated, as well as families' output in terms of actions in relation to child sexual abuse.

1.9.3.2 Social norms and roles

At the core of all social systems lie the social norms that keep the system together. The individual within the system will experience the norms as an expectation of values, traditions, lifestyle and duties. Each member's role within a system is closely linked to the social norms, as it determines the attitudes and actions expected from each member (Longres, 2000). The norm-forming component is, as mentioned above, a prominent part within all systemic levels, which consequently involves norms in relation to child sexual abuse.

1.9.3.3 Adaption and person-in-environment fit

Adaption refers to a system's adjustment to environmental conditions and the process in which the environment adjust to individuals and groups. Person-in-environment fit is closely linked, as it measures to what extent the individual or group fits in the environment in terms of needs, rights and wishes (Kirst-Ashman, 2008). This is relevant to the study as families' person-in-environment fit may vary between experiences where the environment allows them to protect their children from sexual abuse, or experiences where the environment hinders them from protecting their children from sexual abuse.

1.9.3.4 Interdependence

Interdependence encompasses the facts that all individuals and systems are dependent on each other. This interdependency refers to relying on others for input and services (Kirst-Ashman, 2008). This does, according to the researcher, imply that the role of families in protecting children from sexual abuse is interdependent. It is hereby relevant to investigate how outside input and services affect families' protection of children from sexual abuse.

1.9.4 Socio-cultural factors within the social environment

Kirst-Ashman (2008, p. 16) describes the social environment according to ecosystems theory as *"the conditions, circumstances and human interactions that*

encompasses human beings". The ecological perspective incorporates physical elements in the understanding of social environment (Kirst-Ashman, 2008). The description of the social environment in one sense also sums up the essence of the socio-cultural factors that influence families' protection of children from sexual abuse. Schriver (2011, p. 299) states, "*The socio-cultural context is a way of understanding the social ecology of families*". The socio-cultural context includes how society influences the family and how the family attach meaning to life events. The meaning is in itself linked to the cultural context (Schriver, 2011). Gil (1970 in Hobbs & Wynne, 2002) argues that cultural practices, values and beliefs, especially in relation to violence, influence parenting and the extent to which the community tolerate child abuse. Guma and Henda (2004, p. 96) refers to, "*the socio-cultural values, perceptions and coercive practices which incline towards violence and abuse, and which tends to be reasoned and perpetuated as the society's custom*".

1.9.5 Culture and society

Sauna (1985) focus on the family when discussing the influence of culture on mental illness. The influence of socio-cultural factors is noted, but a trend of reluctance within the field, of recognising the importance of these factors, is highlighted. The influence of social class is, however, more commonly recognised compared to cultural influences. Sauna (1985, p. 867) posed several explanations, such as the unpopularity of viewing a culture as "*disease-producing*". This reflects the historically sensitive nature of conducting research in relation to exploring cultural influences. The choice of using qualitative methods has been vital, as it seeks the perspective of the participants. Acheampong Yaw (2007) reviewed the major relevant theoretical orientations previously used when studying families in South Africa. They revealed the use of a predominant theoretical approach until around 1990, which focused on families functioning within society and an approach that was dominated by a western worldview. Acheampong Yaw (2007) further criticise this approach as producing incorrect results and results out-of-step with context. The choice of theoretical framework is therefore of uttermost importance in order to avoid falling in to the trap of viewing a culture as "disease producing" (Sauna, 1985, p. 867). The theoretical frameworks of the present research offer ways of understanding families that are not limited to their functioning within society (Acheampong Yaw, 2007). The social

constructionism perspective and the ecosystem approach rather provide ways of understanding families' functioning within the social environment and as influenced by various socio-cultural processes (Burr, 2003; Kirst-Ashman, 2008; Schriver, 2011). (Schriver, 2011) reviewed various definitions of culture and concluded that, *"culture is constructed by groups of people (societies), is made up of beliefs, practices and products (artefacts) and is passed from one generation to another"* (Schriver, 2011, p. 22). A differentiation is made between a macro culture and cultures within groups where the members share a common identity (micro system, meso system or exo system). Culture is transmitted through socialisation that includes (1) formal teaching and rules and (2) enculturation that includes subtle teaching in the course of everyday life. The transmission of culture is closely linked to power as a dominant society or group will shape cultural practice and worldviews (Schriver, 2011). Religious and spiritual institutions play an important role in the transmission of culture in many African societies (Schriver, 2011). Investigating community leaders' perceptions of sexual abuse, and how these influence families' perceptions and protection of their children from sexual abuse, therefore becomes relevant.

1.10 Definitions of concepts as they apply to the study

1.10.1 Sexual abuse

Kempe and Kempe's (1978) definition of sexual abuse has been used:

"The involvement of dependent, developmentally immature children and adolescents in sexual activities which they do not fully comprehend, are able to give informed consent to and that violate social taboos of family roles" (Kempe & Kempe, 1978, in Porter, 1989, p. 59 and Richter & Highson-Smith, 2004, p. 3).

The definition applied in the study further included: *"any form of non-consenting interpersonal sexual behaviour that poses some risk or harm to the (non-consenting) individual"* (Calder, 1999, in Richter & Highson-Smith, 2004, p. 3).

1.10.2 Sexual abuse of young children

Richter and Highson-Smith (2004) point out that sexual abuse of young children differs from sexual abuse of children who have reached puberty due to various factors related to development in terms of vulnerability and needs. Families' role in protecting children will hereby also vary. This present research therefore investigated this phenomenon in relation to children below the age of 12. Thus the mention of children in the research report refers to young children below the age of 12.

1.10.3 Family

Family is understood as, *“a grouping that consists of two or more individuals who define themselves as family and who over time assume these obligations to one another that are generally considered an essential component of family systems”* (NASW, 1982, in Vosler, 1999, p. 411).

1.11 Preview of the research study

Chapter 2: This chapter includes an overview of the phenomenon of child sexual abuse, child protection procedures and preventative practice both locally and internationally. It will further cover the literature specific to families and child sexual abuse. The chapter's main focus will be on relevant literature covering socio-cultural factors that have been found to increase vulnerability in relation to child sexual abuse with emphasis on factors that are specifically relevant to the development world.

Chapter 3: This chapter outlines the research methodology that was used to arrive at the findings of this study. This chapter also includes the ethical issues considered in the study and limitations of the study.

Chapter 4: This chapter presents the results and findings of the study. The presentation will include themes and sub-themes that emerged from the data analysis and a discussion of these in relation to the literature review.

Chapter 5: This chapter will give a summary of the study and outline the overall conclusion. It will also include recommendations for preventative practice and for future research.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter begins with an overview of child sexual abuse and the local and global relevance of its historical context. The discussion in relation to the historical context of child sexual abuse will link to the theoretical framework of social constructionism. This section is followed by (1) a review of risk factors that render children vulnerable to sexual abuse and (2) a review of the role of the family within the context of South Africa. Socio-cultural factors will thereafter be discussed in relation to: families' responses to disclosure of child sexual abuse, families' protection of children from sexual abuse and the particular influences in terms of carers'/parents' perceptions of child sexual abuse. The socio-cultural influences will be discussed in relation to theories of social constructionism and ecosystems theory. The chapter ends with a presentation and a discussion of prevention programmes in relation to child sexual abuse.

2.2 Overview of child sexual abuse

"The sexual abuse of children is recognised as a serious problem, both because of its epidemic proportions and the increasing evidence of its traumatic impact on the child, family and the larger community" (Killian & Brakarsh, 2004, p. 362).

Setting the scene in order to understand child sexual abuse as a social problem in South Africa (Collings, 1997; Lalor, 2004; Madu & Peltzer, 2001) requires insight into the prevalence of child sexual abuse and its impact.

Determining the prevalence and comparing local and global statistics of child sexual abuse is not straight forward. This is attributed to the hidden nature of child sexual abuse and the fact that research studies that aim to determine the prevalence of child sexual abuse vary in terms its definition. Comparing the findings between studies proves to be challenging. Townsend and Dawes (2004) highlight variations that exist between research studies in terms of applied definitions of child sexual

abuse. The researcher has found various definitions of child sexual abuse. Kempe and Kempe's definition of sexual abuse encompasses the following : *"The involvement of dependent, developmentally immature children and adolescents in sexual activities which they do not fully comprehend, are unable to give informed consent to and that violate social taboos of family roles."* (Kempe & Kempe, 1978, in Porter , 1989, p. 59; Richter & Highson-Smith 2004, p. 3). Calder defines child sexual abuse as: *any form of non-consenting interpersonal sexual behaviour that poses some risk of harm to the (non-consenting) individual*" (Calder, 1999, p. 10 in Townsend & Dawes, 2004, p. 59). Some studies are carried out in relation to child rape in particular, which is a form of child sexual abuse (Richter & Highson-Smith, 2004).

The researcher notes that there are various dimensions to child sexual abuse, which make it difficult to establish the seriousness of the issue of child sexual abuse in South Africa by pointing to statistics or comparisons with global statistics. There is, however, consensus that child sexual abuse is a social problem that is escalating in Southern Africa and particularly in South Africa (Collings, 1997; Lalor, 2004; Loffell, 2002; Madu & Peltzer, 2001). Keeton (2004) also reports that concerns were raised regarding child sexual abuse being on the rise in southern Africa at the first African conference on sexual health and rights in Johannesburg in 2004. It is difficult to find statistics to prove to what extent child sexual abuse is on the rise and whether or not it has reached epidemic proportions in South Africa. This is attributed to the majority of cases not being reported to the police or to other service providers. The trend of cases not being reported is closely linked to child sexual abuse being a hidden issue in the community (Keeton, 2004; Richter & Dawes, 2008).

The researcher notes that variations also exist in terms of statistics based on records of reported cases of child sexual abuse. van Niekerk (2002) point out that sexual abuse is the most commonly reported criminal offence in South Africa. (Collings, 2008) illustrates vast differences in statistics from 'Childline', based on records dating 8-9 years back from 2004, and Collings' study based on records from a state hospital in KwaZulu Ntaal during the period January 2001 to December 2006. The statistics from 'Childline' indicated a 400 % increase of child sexual abuse (van Niekerk, 2004 in Collings, 2008), while Collings' study in hospitals indicated an

increase of 22%. Despite differences such as these the researcher concludes there is a clear consensus within the field that child sexual abuse is escalating in South Africa, and that South Africa has a much higher prevalence of child sexual abuse than that indicated by statistics alone. Highson-Smith and Lamprecht (2004) point out that the actual number of child sexual abuse cases are not detected in research studies or estimates made by social service providers or by the police. The researcher notes that it is difficult to determine whether the prevalence in South Africa is higher, lower or corresponds with international rates.

Collings (1997) refers to a research study among South African women (Levett, 1989a, 1989b in Collings, 1997) that indicated a significantly higher prevalence of sexual abuse than results from studies among American college students (Collings, 1997). Collings (1997) does however raise a concern regarding differences in definitions between the two studies. Collings therefore conducted a study among South African university students which applied a similar definition of sexual abuse and which used similar methods of data collection to those used in studies with American college students. The findings in the study (Collings, 1997) indicated a prevalence rate of 34.8%. This prevalence rate is consistent with the 30.9% prevalence rate obtained for contact forms of child sexual abuse in previous studies among South African female students. The results are also significantly higher than rates obtained in studies with American college students (Collings, 1997). Collings (1997) further points out that the prevalence rate is consistent with the mean prevalence figure of 34.6% (range 31.9% to 38%) among the general population of adult women in North America (Russell, 1986 in Collings, 1997) and New Zealand (Martin, 1994 in Collings 1997). Collings (1997) does however highlight that generalisation of the prevalence rate from his study should be made with caution as university women cannot be seen as representative of the general population of adult women in South Africa. The researcher believes that this caveat very much applies to whether these findings are applicable to a disadvantaged area such as the location for this study. With this in mind the researcher suggests that the results found in a study by Madu and Peltzer (2001) might better indicate possible prevalence rates applicable to this study. The study by Madu and Peltzer (2001) was

carried out among secondary school students in a Northern Province of South Africa and revealed a prevalence of 54, 2%.

Child sexual abuse is recognised as having devastating effects on both children and families (Burkhardt & Rotatori, 1995; Jones & Ramchandani, 1999; Killian & Brakarsh, 2004). Children suffer both long term and short term effects from sexual abuse in terms of their mental health and disturbed behaviours. This involves post-traumatic stress disorder and increased sexualised behaviours. Victims report symptoms such as anxiety, depression and suicidal thoughts (Jones & Ramchandani, 1999; Killian & Brakarsh, 2004). The physical injuries on the victim become more severe the younger the child is, with the rape of infants causing the most extreme physical damage (Richter & Highson-Smith, 2004). Killian and Brakarsh (2004) point out that community members in South Africa report that child sexual abuse is one of the main issues in the community which renders children vulnerable and creates difficulties in children's lives. This is particularly the case in areas which are faced with other social problems such as poverty and a high HIV/AIDS rate. Burkhardt and Rotatori (1995) refer specifically to long term effects of child sexual abuse. In this regard, female victims are more likely to take on a victim role, which they continue to re-enact later in life as victims of domestic violence or victims of further sexual offences. Male victims are on the other hand more likely to identify with the perpetrator and later victimise others (Burkhardt & Rotatori, 1995).

Child sexual abuse is either perpetrated by a relative (interfamilial abuse) or unrelated adults (extra familial abuse) such as neighbours, friends or teachers (Burkhardt & Rotatori, 1995). Burkhardt and Rotatori (1995) describe five different types of interfamilial sexual abuse:

1. Subtle abuse includes cases where the perpetrator used the child to gratify his/her sexual needs but he/she did not intend to be sexual or harmful to the child.
2. Seductive abuse includes cases where the perpetrator stimulates the child sexually in an inappropriate manner in relation to the child's age. This type of abuse also includes the act which gratifies the perpetrator's sexual needs.

3. Perverse abuse includes cases where the perpetrator intentionally acts to sexually humiliate the child.
4. Overt sexual abuse includes cases of direct sexual contact between the perpetrator and the child and involves some type of coercion.
5. Sadistic sexual abuse includes cases of sexual activity where the perpetrator intends to physically harm the child.

Larsen et al. (1998) point out that extrafamilial child sexual abuse is more common in comparison to interfamilial child sexual abuse in South Africa and that this constitutes a difference from trends in other societies where interfamilial child sexual abuse is comparatively more common. This is very interesting as it points to a great need for families to protect their children from potential perpetrators outside of the home. Larsen et al. (1998) do however caution that results showing this trend may derive from respondents hiding experiences of interfamilial child sexual abuse due to its sensitive nature. A study in South Africa by Madu and Peltzer (2001) indicated a friend as the most common perpetrator. Larsen et al. (1998) carried out a study in a hospital in KwaZulu-Natal which concluded that perpetrators consisted of 51.6% persons outside the home, 37.3% not identified and 11% family members. A large proportion of child sexual abuse cases which are reported to 'Childline' involve teenage or young adult perpetrators (van Niekerk, 2004). Collings (2008) also agrees that the age of perpetrators is falling. Collings (2008) does however state that 32% of offenders are below the age of 18, while data from 'Childline' indicates that 43% of offenders are below the age of 18 (van Niekerk, 2006 in Collings, 2008). Richter and Higson-Smith (2004) highlight that rape, of young children in South Africa, is most commonly perpetrated by a family member or an adult in the child's home. The younger a child, the higher the likelihood of the sexual abuse being repeated over time (Richter & Higson-Smith, 2004). van Niekerk (2004) points out that 'Childline' has observed a decrease in age of victims of sexual assault while Collings (2008) points to an increase in terms of the age of the victims. Collings (2008) concludes that variations among studies of trends of child sexual abuse indicate that there are significant spatial variations in results. Collings (2008) argues that due to variations such as these there is a need for service providers to monitor cases which are reported to the agencies and to monitor trends in the geographical area of operation. This is important in order to ensure that service providers address

the bespoke local need in terms of child sexual abuse (Collings, 2008). The researcher believes that although this study will not provide statistical data in terms of local trends it may shed light on community perspectives on local trends as it seeks their experiences of child sexual abuse. This is however not the purpose of the study, which rather relates to the fact that: *“There is however, not only a need to produce a substantial body of research and literature on child sexual abuse in South Africa, but also to adopt a frame of reference that will provide a meaningful African context”* (Magwaza, 1997, p. 159). The remaining part of this chapter will discuss factors relevant to the African continent in relation to its history, culture and social challenges.

2.3 The historical context of child sexual abuse

Understanding child sexual abuse within the historical context is highly relevant as human constructions and understanding of the phenomenon of child sexual abuse are historically determined (Burr, 2003). This relates to how families and communities worldwide, and in South Africa historically, have constructed the way that they understand child sexual abuse and the way that they protect children from child sexual abuse. Child sexual abuse is not a new phenomenon or a problem peculiar to South Africa. Many forms of child sexual abuse have historically been ignored, hidden and covered up all over the world (Richter & Highson-Smith, 2004). There is however a particular need to review the South African historical context of child sexual abuse in order to understand the deep-rooted and established conditions that lead to high levels of sexual violence in the country (Posel, 2005). The theoretical framework of social constructionism further highlights the relevance of understanding the historical context in order to understand the way that families relate, and act in relation to child sexual abuse. Posel (2005) does however point out that not enough is known about the history of child sexual abuse in South Africa. When starting to trace the historical conditions of sexual violence it becomes evident that the issue received very limited attention during apartheid and was concealed by strong political and cultural forces. These forces were particularly strong with regards to sexual violence within marriage and family. The racially oppressive regime during apartheid also played a role in ignoring and worsening the issue of sexual violence in the community. Police were less likely to take action in cases of sexual violence

reported by the black population. The state showed little interest in reports of worsening sexual violence as the issue was seen through the eyes of colonial misconceptions about sexuality within black communities. The state therefore accepted sexual violence as normal within these communities (Posel, 2005).

A slow shift within the public arena was initially triggered by the feminist movement, which mobilised against rape. The first rape crisis centres were founded in 1977 and 1979. It was not until 1982 that the debate about rape reached further, beyond feminist circles. This was triggered by media stories about the trauma of rape and accounts of trauma instilled by the South African Police on rape victims. Political forces acknowledged the public concern regarding frequent cases of rape, but rape was not seen to be an important social problem. Public mobilisation to take action against sexual violence was slow to develop even though the issue of sexual violence was known to be a harsh reality, especially in areas where there was poverty and other social problems (Posel, 2005). Russel (1991, p. 65 in Posel, 2005, p.244) refers to deep-rooted and established conditions in relation to child sexual abuse when describing how rape had become “a new style” in townships where young boys played a game which involved kidnap and rape. The researcher poses that some of these deep-rooted social constructions that involve acceptance and passivity in relation to child sexual abuse may still influence families’ protection and responses in relation to their protection of children from sexual abuse.

The issue of sexual violence was given increased attention within the public arena after 1994, in post-apartheid South Africa. Much of the public debate focused on fathers failing in their role to protect children from sexual abuse. Child sexual abuse did however still remain an issue of low priority and few interventions were implemented in order to address sexual violence in the community (Posel, 2005). Posel (2005) points out that the passive trend continued long after 1994 as president Mbeki, for example, remained passive and quiet on the topic during his term of presidency. Posel further argues that the slow responses can be partly understood from the point of view that the issue of sexual violence was attributed to concerns regarding fatherhood and manhood. Acknowledging the issue would therefore put the feasibility of the new democracy in question. The threat to manhood consequently hampered the vision of a healthy and responsible nation. The first

large public march by men protesting against sexual violence took place in 2000. Attention regarding the issue of child rape later exploded in 2001, with various stories in the media about the rape of young infants (Posel, 2005).

2.4 Child vulnerability and risk factors in relation to child sexual abuse

There are many models that seek to explain the cause of child sexual abuse as individuals interact with each other within the family system on the micro level. These models relate to perpetrator factors, cycles of abuse, and family functioning (Babatsikos, 2010; Hobbs & Wynne, 2002; Porter, 1984; Townsend & Dawes, 2004). The literature also includes information with regards to individual factors that influence families' responses to child sexual abuse, such as divided loyalty between the perpetrator and the child (Bernard, 2001). Plummer and Njuguna (2009) refer to factors such as community risk factors and societal risk factors as being equally important to individual and family factors. These factors are relevant to examining interaction between the family (micro system) and the meso system, exo system and macro system. Overall, there is consensus that sexual abuse results from a complex combination of individual, social and environmental influences. The social and environmental influences are referred to as risk factors that make children vulnerable to sexual abuse within their families and their communities (Hobbs & Wynne, 2002; Jewkes, 2004; Townsend & Dawes, 2004).

Burkhardt and Rotatori (1995) refer to a distinction between vulnerability and risk factors in relation to child sexual abuse. Risk factors present themselves as situations in the environment that raise the likelihood of a child being exposed to a perpetrator while vulnerability relates to the likelihood of the child being a victim of sexual abuse due to his/her individual characteristics (Burkhardt & Rotatori, 1995). The researcher believes that both vulnerability and risk factors are relevant to families' protection of their children from sexual abuse as the first factor indicates the need for families to build resilience in children in order to decrease vulnerability, and the second indicates the need for families to address potential risk factors in the child's environment. Carers' and parents' roles in addressing these factors are further discussed later in the chapter with regards to ways of preventing child sexual abuse.

The researcher also believes that some the risk factors in the environment can be seen as hindrances that need to be overcome in order for families to better protect their children from sexual abuse. Hence the discussion in this chapter will focus on socio-cultural factors that influence the family system and an overview of these will follow here. Jewkes, Penn-Kekana, and Rose-Junius (2005) point out that the available research on the topic is fragmented. It suggests that cultural norms in relation to gender roles, parent-child relationships and the extent of social support and legal responses are important influences in terms of vulnerability and risk factors. (Richter & Dawes, 2008) argue that the high rates of child sexual abuse in South Africa are linked to socio-cultural factors such as poverty, patriarchy and the socialised dependency and silence of women and children. The matter is worsened by lack of resources to support and fulfil the legal frameworks that exist (Richter & Dawes, 2008). Lachman (2004) relates increased vulnerability of children in the developing world to issues such as poverty, HIV/AIDS and family disruption being more prominent in these regions. Madu (2003) concludes that attempts have been made to determine risk factors in societies all over the world but there is little consensus as findings have not been replicated across studies.

2.5 The threat to the institution of family in South Africa

Magwaza (1997) identifies many contextual risk factors for child sexual abuse which are related to family roles and family structures in South Africa. These factors include lack of bonding between parents and children, especially in terms of the relationship between fathers and children, overcrowded households and children being left without adult supervision.

Budlender and Lund (2011) review how family structure in South Africa affects care responsibilities. The trends in terms of family structure in South Africa are that 35% of children live with both a mother and a father and an equal number of children live only with their mother. Almost one fifth of children have at least one parent that has passed away (Budlender & Lund, 2011). Budlender and Lund (2011) also point out that a great number of households constitute three or more generations living together, and that many grandmothers care for children in the absence of the

parents. Relatives caring for children are common, and these are largely females. Females who have the role of breadwinner and are caring for the children in the household are mostly not seen as the head of the household. The head of the household will rather be a mother-in-law, the father, brothers, sisters or other significant people (Budlender & Lund, 2011). The trend of females carrying most of the care responsibility consequently means that they also carry the main responsibility in protecting children from sexual abuse. This concurs with findings made by (Jewkes et al., 2005) with regards to the view that females are responsible for to the protection of children from child sexual abuse. It is important to view this responsibility in relation to power in terms of decision-making as Budlender and Lund (2011) explain that females very rarely are the head of the household. This is highly relevant as it poses questions regarding limitations and effectiveness of protection of children from sexual abuse as the responsibility is not accompanied by a level of decision-making power. These inequalities in terms of decision-making are closely linked to gender / power relations.

Budlender and Lund (2011) point out that there are great differences in relation to the amount of time that men and women spend on caring activities for children. This is partly explained by fathers living away from their children, but even men who live in a household with children spend limited time carrying out any form of caring activity for those children (Budlender & Lund, 2011). The concerns with regards to this trend is illustrated in the following quote: *“The absence of men in parenting has become a dangerous contributory factor to societal violence as many family units operate with men as the ‘outside’ parties who only come in to the family for feeding and sex”* (Marshall & Herman, 2000, p. 70). Children do generally have a closer relationship with female family members compared to male family members. Children consequently often have a weak bond with male members of the family, which is a cause for concern as research show that this increases the risk of sexual abuse (Magwaza, 1997). Marshall and Herman (2000) argue that increased support and nurturing of children within the family structure will be achieved through shared parental responsibility between males and females, and when males play an active role in the lives of their children. This would also mean increased protection of children from sexual abuse within the family. Social constructionism provides a way to partly understand the role of men in the lives of children, as these roles can be

explained by the history of migrant labour and apartheid (Budlender & Lund, 2011). Marshall and Herman (2000) and Magwaza (1997) also highlight the absence of men in the lives of children being traced to the legacy of apartheid and the migrant labour system which forces families apart. The apartheid regime systematically excluded black people from cities and forced them to live in particular rural areas referred to as homelands or 'locations'. The black people were at the same time exploited as labour on farms or in the mining industry. This meant that the labourers, who at the time were mainly men, left wives and children behind. In the formalised mining industry this meant that men would see their families for four weeks every year. This resulted in extra-marital sexual relationships and very limited opportunities for men to bond with their children. The patterns of migrant labour that were established during this time are still very much evident in South Africa today. This can be linked to the trend of men being less involved in child care and can help to explain why it is extreme in South Africa compared to other countries. Hunter (2006) further explores the role of fatherhood by tracing its historical roots among Zulu speakers in South Africa, and highlighting how social and economical forces prevent men from fulfilling this role today. In this regard Hunter (2004, p. 16) writes: *"In the context of high unemployment and low rates of marriage, many men who father children (in a biological sense) are increasingly unable to fulfil the social roles of fatherhood"*. In the pre-colonial and early colonial era fathering a child was closely linked to the continuation of the homestead and to ensuring a male heir. The social role of fatherhood included the role as the head and protector of the homestead. As the early colonialists seized land from the Zulu's, the homesteads were weakened. Later the need for labour in the mines brought men away from the homestead. These forces ultimately lead to the former social role of fatherhood being diminished (Hunter, 2004).

South Africa also has low rates of marriage and higher rates of extra-marital childbearing compared to the majority of other countries (Budlender & Lund, 2011). Hunter (2004) points out that a major reason for low rates of marriage is men's inability to pay lobolo (bridewealth) due to social factors such as high unemployment. Magwaza (1997) points out that there are increased aspects of risk for children who are born outside of marriage, even though this is socially accepted. It is for example common that an uncle takes over the role of the father in these instances which is

not completely unproblematic, as it may lead to issues of conflict and resentment which ultimately negatively affect the care of the child. The researcher notes that this may mean weakened protection of the child by the family. Budlender and Lund (2011) further refer to families as fractured in South Africa, and argue that this cannot be explained only due to the effects of HIV/AIDS. Siqwana-Ndulo (1998) warns against viewing family set up in South Africa as non- functioning. This relates to the discussion in chapter one about avoiding viewing South African family functioning from a western stand point (Acheampong Yaw, 2007). There has been limited research carried out with regards to families in South Africa with the research field mainly focussing on polygamy and the effects of migrant labour according to Siqwana-Ndulo (1998).

While external factors affect the way families organise themselves, cultural factors also play an important role. It is thus vital to view families by focus on their resilience and adaptive features (Siqwana-Ndulo, 1998). This view point has been taken into account as both strengths and limitations of family functioning in terms of protection of children from sexual abuse are to be investigated. The discussion regarding family roles further links to the study as the family roles will be explored in relation to families' protection of children from sexual abuse. Siqwana-Ndulo (1998) highlights the importance of culture in the way that families organise themselves. Thus the way in which families organise themselves in protecting children from sexual abuse is culturally determined.

Mungazi (1996) highlights that families within the African continent need to be understood in relation to how family customs, that for centuries have been very strong, either have disappeared or have been significantly weakened. These customs meant that families operated along clearly defined lines. Some of these family customs included the notion that children and their wellbeing were seen as very important, and that men and women held mutual respect for each other. The concept of family was also held in high esteem by the larger community as the family was viewed as an extension of the larger community (Mungazi, 1996). Guma and Henda (2004) describe how parenthood is a broadly shared responsibility in African societies. This responsibility is shared by the biological parents, their relatives and others of a similar age or older: *"The notion of family is understood as an inclusive*

concept, it is expressed as a corporate and embodied phenomenon. In this context parenthood is a shared social responsibility” (Guma & Henda, 2004, p. 102). The weakening of traditional family systems needs to be understood both in relation to colonial forces, and also in relation to social changes such as industrialisation, which placed new demands and challenges on the family (Mungazi, 1996). In this regard Mungazi (1996, p.28) writes that: *the family was one of the strongest cohesive devices in traditional African life. This suggests that it was, therefore, not possible for colonial systems to discredit the African culture without destroying the African concept of the family; and they could not destroy this concept without the cooperation of the Africans.”* Mungazi (1996) continues to refer to an emerging African culture where the majority of the current generation has never known or experienced traditional African culture. The weakening of traditional African culture has, on the other hand, led to reactions to keep hold of African traditions in order to fight back against colonialism. This legacy and its influences are still visible in African society today (Mungazi, 1996). The weakening of traditional African family customs might have effects on families protection of children from sexual abuse. It is possible that part of the perception among families and communities regarding child sexual abuse includes reactions in relation to keeping traditional African practices. Trends in terms of sexual abuse escalating can be seen in relation to weakening traditional family customs being replaced by new family customs within an emerging African culture. Current family customs, which have emerged due to colonial forces and in response to new social demands, may not adequately include protection of children from sexual abuse.

2.6 Families’ responses to disclosure of child sexual abuse

“Non-supportive disclosure in child sexual abuse (CSA) occurs when a confidant fails to take appropriate protective action, does not believe the child’s account, and/or blames the child for the abuse” (Collings, 2005, p. 13). This quote can be said to explain three main ways in which families can possibly fail the child namely:

1. Not protecting the child from further sexual abuse
2. Doubting the occurrence of child sexual abuse reported by the child
3. Further traumatising the child by instilling shame and blame

In summary, a non-supportive response relates to when a family member fails to support a child who discloses sexual abuse. There are also subtle ways in which family members or others might respond non-supportively by failing to take action in situations when there is evidence that suggests child sexual abuse, and when there are indications that suggest that child sexual abuse should be investigated (Collings, 2005). Collings examines responses to child sexual abuse by focusing on investigating choices related to whether to acknowledge that sexual abuse has taken place, and choices related to how to further respond when faced with the reality that a child has been sexually abused. The choice of not acknowledging that a child has been sexually abused is closely linked to perceiving that the child consented to or is to blame for the disclosed event of child sexual abuse. This way of understanding the disclosure will evidently lead to non-supportive responses. Another scenario where an individual does not acknowledge the occurrence of child sexual abuse is when he/she uses a narrow definition of child sexual abuse. The narrow definition could for example limit the definition of child sexual abuse solely to involve penetrative forms of sexual activity (Collings, 2005). The researcher concludes that families' responses to child sexual abuse seem to be influenced by their understanding and definition of the phenomenon. This corresponds with the perspective of social constructionism, which states that peoples' views and understanding determine certain behavioural patterns and exclude others (Burr, 2003). In reviewing the study by Jewkes et al. (2005) it becomes evident that it is not uncommon that families in South Africa appear to fail to support a child who reports sexual abuse through both further traumatising the child by blaming the child for the incidents or through failing to protect the child from further sexual abuse. The study which was carried out by Jewkes et al. (2005) in Nigeria and South Africa suggests that it was only in cases involving very young children that the victim was undisputedly viewed as not to blame for the incidents of child rape. The study also showed that strong actions were many times not taken by the family of the victim against the perpetrator, and the perpetrator was many times protected by their family or the wider community. Child rape is also at times seen as a private problem, which in turn means absence of or weak assistance for victims of child sexual abuse by outside people (Jewkes et al., 2005).

It is not only families' understanding of child sexual abuse that plays a role in terms of how they respond to child sexual abuse. Collings (1997) describes that responses made when faced with child sexual abuse involve choices that are very much influenced by social factors and other individuals in the social environment. Choices in terms of how to respond to child sexual abuse include consideration of possible costs and benefits. Benefits that will influence the decision revolve around the safety of the child and significant others. Costs that will be considered are among others factors, related to the offender, to economic factors and factors related to pressure or stigmatisation by others in the family or the community (Finkelhor, Wolak & Berliner, 2001 in Collings, 2005). van Niekerk (2002) links this to the reality of South Africa where many cases of child sexual abuse are not reported due to families, especially in rural areas, experiencing pressure, intimidation and threats with the aim to silence them. These influences within the neighbourhood relate to influences on the level of the meso system as discussed by Kirst-Ashman (2008). Families might receive little support and assistance with regards to child sexual abuse from individuals in their immediate environment due to stigma, fears and taboos. It is also common that family members in South Africa are forced to consider the financial cost of reporting the case of child sexual abuse as the family depends on the perpetrator to survive (van Niekerk, 2002). Jewkes et al. (2005) confirm the opinion of van Niekerk (2002) that many cases of child sexual abuse are not being reported to agencies within the formal child protection system, including social workers or the law enforcement, due to shame, threats and fears and taboos in the community in relation to child sexual abuse. The study that was carried out by Jewkes et al. (2005) in South Africa and Namibia identified three common responses to an incident where a child had been raped:

1. The family reports the incident to the police or the tribal authority and pursues a court case.
2. The family stays passive.
3. The family accepts payment as compensation.
4. In Namibia another response further emerged which involved the family seeking vengeance with the help of traditional healers.

The findings from South Africa showed that many other social problems were seen as more important than child rape and incest, which in turn guided responses to the phenomenon. Child rape was overshadowed by possible family disruption, shame or actions to protect the child from sexual abuse leading to increased poverty. There were also accounts where other community members offered advice, for example, advice which entailed a mother staying with her husband who she had discovered had raped her child (Jewkes et al., 2005). Madu (2003) highlights that there are consequences in relation to cases of child sexual abuse not coming to the attention of child protection agencies as this means that the perpetrator remains free in the community. It also leads to psychological, social and psychiatric effects of the abuse on the victim remaining unaddressed (Madu, 2003).

Collings (2008) highlighted that explicit detection of child sexual abuse occurs in 43% of cases. The incidence is detected through disclosure by the child or by a third party becoming an eyewitness. Collings further points to 42% of cases being detected as a second party such as a teacher or a community member identify signs of child sexual abuse in relation to observed physical indicators or behavioural changes. The remaining 9 % of cases that are detected lead from instances where the child victim indirectly hints at the occurrence of child sexual abuse. These statistics show that various parties such as caretakers or professionals play a role in detecting child sexual abuse and consequently also in responding to identified indications of child sexual abuse (Collings, 2008).

2.7 Perceptions of child sexual abuse

The social constructionism perspective indicates that families' perceptions and understanding in relation to child sexual abuse affect the way that they in turn protect their children from sexual abuse. Studies by Ige and Fawole (2011), Babatsikos (2010) and Stevens et al. (2004) with regards to parents' perceptions and their preventative practises support this view point. (Ige & Fawole, 2011) argue that carers' perception of child sexual abuse may influence their willingness to prevent child sexual abuse. Carers' perceptions of child sexual abuse and the way that they protect their child from sexual abuse have also been found to negatively impact the child's ability to self-protect. This link is significant as it points to the vital role that

parents and carers play in addressing what Burkhardt and Rotatori (1995) refer to as the child's vulnerability to child sexual abuse. The results in the study by Ige and Fawole (2011) among parents in Nigeria pointed to the majority of the parents viewing child sexual abuse as a problem in their community. The study also showed that the parents did not agree with common myths related to sexual abuse. However, the majority of the parents did not indicate concern regarding their own child potentially being sexually abused, and over a quarter left their children alone and unsupervised (Ige & Fawole, 2011). This chapter later looks at social and economic issues that force parents to leave their children unsupervised, but Swart-Kruger (1994) points out that this may also be linked to parents' perceptions in relation to children being able to look after themselves. Swart-Kruger (1993 in Swart-Kruger, 1994) studied the occurrence of latchkey children in Johannesburg and Soweto. The term originates from America to refer to children with their own keys to their home because their fathers had gone away to war and their mothers had been forced to join the job market. Latchkey children are children "between 4 and 16 years of age, who are regularly left without supervision and who may, therefore, be described as being in self-care" (Swart-Kruger, 1994, p. 136). The study revealed the highest incidence of latchkey children (64%) among households in Soweto that earned R2000- R3000 per month. A majority of parents expressed that they left their children unsupervised as they believed that the children were able to look after themselves and not because they felt forced to do so (Swart-Kruger, 1994).

Babatsikos (2010) reviewed worldwide studies in relation to parents' attitudes and preventative practices in relation to child sexual abuse. General results revealed that myths and misconceptions existed around the idea that strangers pose the greatest risk, that there would be physical evidence of the sexual abuse and uncertainty about the credibility of the child. Specific results concerning African families revealed beliefs related to western influences such as provocative dress leading to children being sexually abused and that the child or irresponsible parents are to blame. The parents also viewed poverty, witchcraft and sexual distortion as factors behind sexual abuse. Further, the studies revealed that parents are willing to speak to their children about sexual abuse but that they experience that they are incapable to do so (Babatsikos, 2010).

Stevens et al. (2004) point out that individual perception of child sexual abuse is influenced by widely shared socially constructed understandings of the phenomenon. The following three broad categories of myths and stereotypes attributed to shared social constructions of the phenomenon are presented:

1. *“Restrictive Stereotypes”* that provide a restricted understanding of child sexual abuse by denying factual realities in relation to the occurrence and consequences of sexual abuse. An example is to restrict sexual abuse by attributing it to perpetrators that are unknown to the child.
2. *“Denial of abusiveness”* which fails to acknowledge the abusive nature of child sexual abuse or which minimises harmful consequences of the abuse for the child.
3. *“Blame Diffusion”* which links the issue of blame and the reasons for the occurrence of child sexual abuse to factors other than those related to the perpetrator. This may include factors that relate to the behaviour of the child or personal attributes of the child (Collings, 1997 in Stevens et al., 2004, p. 20).

Stevens et al. (2004) conclude that individuals who presented higher scores in relation to the three categories of myths and stereotypes above were more likely to fail to acknowledge the occurrence of child sexual abuse.

2.8 Gender power relations

Jewkes et al. (2005) argue that it is significant to understand child sexual abuse by examining gender power relations. Richter, Dawes, and Highson-Smith (2004) refer to abuse as closely linked to power. In patriarchal societies men culturally have the power to abuse and may view abusive behaviours as their right. Gender / power relations may hinder female family members from intervening in order to stop incidents of child sexual abuse. The abusive behaviour further becomes socially accepted by women and sometimes even expected. Abuse is more likely to occur where it is accepted and expected for men to exercise power over women and children (Guma & Henda, 2004; Richter et al., 2004). This can be understood as men having determined existing social constructions of child sexual abuse due to unequal gender power relations. Child sexual abuse may therefore become socially

accepted as these social constructions set boundaries for acceptable and non-acceptable behaviour according to Burr (2003). The study by Jewkes et al. (2005) confirms the notion of male actions not being questioned in South African society, especially when it comes to older males. The study also showed that many respondents in South Africa perceived men as unable to control their sexual desires. Children were consequently said to become convenient targets as they were too young to talk or as they could be bribed to not report the incidents of child sexual abuse (Jewkes et al., 2005). The notion that aspects of child sexual abuse by male perpetrators may be socially accepted would influence both male and female family members' ability to protect children from sexual abuse. It links to what Collings (1997) points out about how families' understanding of child sexual abuse determines their response, in the sense that if a child is sexually abused by a male perpetrator it might be socially accepted and expected. If families' understanding involves sexual abuse by males being accepted, it will consequently mean that they will respond accordingly. Family members might thus respond with little resistance to stop the occurrence of child sexual abuse regardless of being aware of it occurring. Parents can also play an active role in preventing child sexual abuse through engaging with the child in relation to child sexual abuse (Bagley & Thurston, 1996). Another possible consequence in relation to social acceptance of sexual abuse would be that family members make little effort to prevent child sexual abuse. The fact that the main responsibility for child rearing falls on women in the community context of South Africa is also highly relevant to the study as it means that the responsibility to protect children from sexual abuse falls on the female family members as pointed out by Jewkes et al. (2005). Female family members are faced with the task to protect children from sexual abuse but may lack the power to do so in relation to male family members. Magwaza (1997, p. 162) refers to the need to understand *"the powerlessness of mothers and mother figures"*. African culture is highly patriarchal which means that females have to obey male figures without questioning their decisions. Jewkes et al. (2005) found that respondents in their study did not refer to fathers as protectors of their children against sexual abuse and that they therefore tended to blame female carers and female victims for incidents of child sexual abuse. Ecosystem theory points to how the family system has defined boundaries in terms of both roles and norms (Longres, 2000). The researcher finds this relevant as it indicates that each family will have certain roles which they expect

mothers to fill and certain roles which they expect fathers to fill. As each family system interaction is influenced by other systems according to Longres (2000) the researcher concludes that gender roles and the norms attached to them will be influenced by other systems such as the neighbourhood, the wider community or the cultural practice within the larger society.

2.9 The cultural context

Gil (1970 in Hobbs & Wynne, 2002) points out how cultural practices, values and beliefs, especially in relation to violence, influence parenting and the extent to which the community tolerates child abuse. Guma and Henda (2004) point to cultural differences in definition of various forms of abuse which leads to acceptance of behaviours that contradict The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in relation to children's right to safety and protection. Cultural factors are thus likely to be linked to why many cases of child sexual abuse in South Africa go unreported. The cultural context may discourage and intimidate children from disclosing incidents of sexual abuse. It may also determine how parents, carers and relatives react to, and act upon, disclosure of child sexual abuse. Guma and Henda (2004) argue that legal frameworks and procedures on state and public levels are not sufficient in addressing the issue of child sexual abuse as cultural practices guide families to respond to child sexual abuse in ways that contradict children's right to safety and protection. Guma and Henda suggest that the way forward lies in changing views and practices, which do not deal with child sexual abuse as a human rights issue, within the private arena and within the local community. This very much includes defining child sexual abuse beyond cultural, national and continental borders (Guma & Henda, 2004). Human social constructions of child sexual abuse are culturally determined according to Burr (2003). The cultural context does according to ecosystems theory relate to the micro system, the meso system, the exo system and the macro system as all these systems involve norm-forming components (Rogers, 2010). Cultural beliefs and practice in relation to child sexual abuse can be seen to be determined at all levels of society. The researcher therefore concludes that what Guma and Henda (2004) suggest involves challenging culturally and historically socially constructed views and practices. It would also include challenging views and practices within all levels of society.

The normalisation of child sexual abuse has been shown to have historical roots as the issue was ignored by the apartheid government (Posel, 2005). This trend lives on in the community, as Townsend and Dawes (2004) point out that normalisation plays a contributing factor in escalating child sexual abuse in the community. This includes children never reporting child sexual abuse and/or adults not taking action in cases of child sexual abuse due to acceptance of the phenomenon. This in turn escalates into a vicious cycle, as not getting caught encourages the perpetrator to continue to sexually abuse the particular victim, and possibly other children as well. It may further encourage others in the community to mimic the passive behaviour in relation to child sexual abuse (Townsend & Dawes, 2004). The occurrence of mimicked passive behaviours can be understood from a perspective of social constructionism as socially constructed beliefs and practices are formed through everyday social interaction (Burr, 2003). This cycle of normalisation and acceptance of child sexual abuse is highlighted by Guma and Henda (2004, p. 103) who write that the South African society *“has a ‘rape culture’, in which violence against women and children has become tacitly accepted.”*

The criminal justice system is sometimes substituted or used in conjunction with traditional practices. It is not uncommon that families choose not to report incidents of child sexual abuse to the police and instead report the matter to traditional leaders in the community. The traditional leader will then order compensation to the child's family and initiate cleaning rituals for the perpetrator. It is significant to note that cases of child sexual abuse are not being reported to the police as section 38 and section 54 of the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act (2007) stipulate that it is mandatory to report sexual offences against children. This type of practice is questionable from the child's perspective as it does not ensure that the child is safe from further abuse and the child does not receive psycho social support (van Niekerk, 2002). Magwaza (1997) points out that some families in South Africa negotiate a fine with the perpetrator when a child has been sexually abused. In these instances the matter is dealt with outside of the legal system and perpetrators are never prosecuted (Magwaza, 1997). This type of practice is insufficient from the point of view of the victim as it solely aims to compensate for the pain caused to the carers while ignoring the trauma suffered by

the child. It further reinforces views of the child victim as 'damaged goods' and leads to possible secondary emotional victimisation of the child (Magwaza, 1997, p. 164).

Plummer and Njuguna (2009) carried out a study in Kenya which explored professionals' perspectives on risk and protective factors in relation to child sexual abuse. The study defined these factors as beliefs and practices that either enhanced or impeded the prevalence of child sexual abuse. The results showed that professionals viewed factors that operate on a cultural and community level as significant in relation to child sexual abuse (Plummer & Njuguna, 2009). This study provides a useful overview of various cultural practices that influence the protection of child sexual abuse and stands out as it also highlights cultural factors that enhances the protection of children from sexual abuse. An overview of the themes that emerged in the study will therefore follow below:

INDIVIDUAL LEVEL ITEMS	FAMILY LEVEL ITEMS	CULTURAL GROUP LEVEL ITEM
PROTECTIVE FACTORS:	PROTECTIVE FACTORS:	PROTECTIVE FACTORS:
Modesty was a category reserved for the concept that dress or behaviour on the part of the potential victim, in this case always mentioned about females, would prevent abuse.	<p>Family structure indicated some ways family operated in the culture to protect children: grandmothers teaching children or mothers staying home to better supervise the children.</p> <p>Guidance and supervision had similarities with family structure, but needed to specifically address the way children were cared for, watched, and given guidance.</p>	<p>Religion or a reference to faith needed to be mentioned explicitly to be included, although some of the related practices (e.g. modesty) were clearly religiously endorsed.</p> <p>Separation was a category for mention of keeping males and females separate, not just as a practice, but specifically to help prevent abuse.</p> <p>Value children included any groups that discussed the importance of children, the children as a future resource, or that children are well-loved in the culture.</p> <p>Harsh deterrents were when known punishments were seen as discouraging sexually abusive behaviour, with outcomes so severe that</p>

		<p>potential offenders would not dare act.</p> <p>Sex and gender taboos included references that men and women were expected to behave differently or had different rules.</p> <p>Importance of virginity was explicitly stated by the group as protective. There were references to dowries, monetary loss, family pride, and rituals that celebrated virginity until marriage.</p>
RISK FACTORS	RISK FACTORS	RISK FACTORS
<p>Individual risks included anything that might indicate increased risk based on status or situation of a child such as divorce, homelessness, or being an AIDS orphan.</p>		<p>Gender roles were social roles or expectations that differentiated males and females that placed children at increased risk of sexual abuse.</p> <p>Patriarchy included any reference to the fact that male dominance or perceived superiority may perpetuate abuse.</p> <p>Culture of silence was a category for those who discussed tribes protecting their own or social norms discouraging discussion of such topics as sex or abuse.</p> <p>Sexual norms included ideas and practices that included sex or sexuality, for example, endorsing FGM or early marriage.</p> <p>Role of children indicated children being low status, not permitted to speak, not being valued and lacking in power.</p>

(Adapted from Plummer & Njuguna, 2009, p. 530)

The professionals in Kenya appear to confirm the opinion of Richter et al. (2004), Guma and Henda (2004) and Jewkes et al. (2005) in terms of gender / power relations contributing to increased risk in relation to child sexual abuse. The culture of silence mentioned by respondents as a risk factor again corresponds with the view presented by van Niekerk (2002) of many cases of child sexual abuse not being reported in South Africa due to shame, fears and taboos in the community.

The findings in the study by Plummer and Njuguna (2009) carried out in Kenya does not however show traces of what Budlender and Lund (2011) refer to as patterns of fractured households and families which have been established through the history of apartheid and migration labour systems. The aspect of the way that families'organise themselves is in itself also culturally determined in accordance with Siqwana-Ndulo (1998). The study by Plummer and Njuguna (2009) points to the possibility of cultural practices enhancing the protection of children from sexual abuse. The study in Kenya indicates the need to restore fractured family households in South Africa and to build on cultural practices in order to strengthen families' protection of children from sexual abuse. This notion corresponds with the views of Plummer and Njuguna (2009) and Richter and Dawes (2008) regarding the importance of building on cultural understanding and practice in prevention programmes with the aim to reduce child sexual abuse in the community (Plummer & Njuguna, 2009; Richter & Dawes, 2008). This will be discussed in more detail later in the chapter with regards to preventative practice.

2.10 Families, poverty and HIV/AIDS

Lachman (2004) relates increased vulnerability of children in the developing world to issues such as poverty, HIV/AIDS and family disruption being more prominent in these regions. Poverty is highly relevant as a factor in the context of South Africa as many families are trapped in cycles of poverty (Acheampong Yaw & Richter, 2007). Loffell (2002) argues that a significant way of reducing child sexual abuse is to tackle the issue of poverty in South Africa as this increases vulnerability in children. The influence of poverty on vulnerability in relation to child sexual does not mean that child sexual abuse does not occur within all social classes in society (Hobbs & Wynne, 2002; Townsend & Dawes, 2004). There are practical challenges linked to

poverty that affect parents' and carers' ability to protect their children from sexual abuse. One such challenge is that parents and carers are unable to monitor and supervise their children as they are forced to seek employment away from home in order to sustain the family economically (Townsend & Dawes, 2004). It is possible that the effects of females being forced to seek employment has even more devastating effects on the protection of children from sexual abuse as men spend very little time caring for children in South Africa (Marshall & Herman, 2000). Jewkes et al. (2005) also point out that children who are being neglected and/or left alone at home by caregivers are rendered vulnerable as this creates opportunities for potential perpetrators. The financial hardships and stresses in the family may in turn also lead to children, when possible, staying away from home which further weakens carers' and parents' ability to monitor and supervise children (Townsend & Dawes, 2004). Thus there seems to be a clear link between HIV/AIDS, poverty and children's vulnerability to sexual abuse. HIV/AIDS increases poverty levels through the loss of breadwinners and added financial strain on the extended family to look after orphaned children (Jewkes, 2004). HIV/AIDS further contributes to increased vulnerability of children to sexual abuse as children whose carers and parents are weak and sick lack the ability to protect and ensure their safety (van Niekerk, 2002). It is important to point out that factors such as HIV/AIDS and poverty ultimately need to be targeted at a macro level as this level regulates the environment in which all other systems interact in accordance with Rogers (2010). These issues contribute to rendering children vulnerable to child sexual abuse and hinders families in protecting children from sexual abuse may be seen as a clarion call in tackling the devastating effects of HIV/AIDS and poverty in terms of politically and financially.

Poverty in many ways influences parents' and carers' inclination to protect their children from sexual abuse. Poverty puts stress and strain on the family who become occupied with basic survival. This in turn leads to carers and parents running the risk of becoming emotionally distant from their children. The researcher believes that this emotional distance means that carers and parents may not be tuned in to notice if their child is being sexually abused. The cycles of poverty also affect families by breaking down their sense of self-worth (Marshall & Herman, 2000). The effects of poverty and other social issues on families is summarised by Marshall and Herman (2000, p. 65) as follows: *"people still live in soul destroying dwellings amidst gang*

violence and rampant survival crime. Within these conditions, adults who have grown up without knowing compassion, support or nurturing are unable to provide the same for their children. Parenting becomes purely functional in terms of paying the rent and purchasing food”.

Conditions in the lives of children provide opportunities for sexual abuse. Such conditions include lack of parental love and the absence of parents in the lives of children. This means that parents rarely offer affection and rarely verbally communicate with their children (Marshall & Herman, 2000). This effect of the cycles of poverty is closely linked to families’ protection of children from sexual abuse as carers and parents need to engage with their children in order to detect abuse and in order to build resilience in children (Bagley & Thurston, 1996).

2.11 The role of child protection services

The child protection system influences the family on exo level as this level includes the legal system and the social service system (Longres, 2000). Literature from as early as 1984 suggests that the responses of families of not intervening on behalf of a sexually abused child is influenced by lack of professional intervention and services in the community (Porter, 1984). This is further supported by more recent literature which points to the effects that the lack of child protection services have on families’ ability to adequately protect their children from sexual abuse (Loffell, 2002, 2004; van Niekerk, 2002). Insufficient child protection services ultimately incapacitate families to efficiently protect their children from sexual abuse. Loffell (2002) points out that child protection interventions around the country are being carried out without sufficient resources and that the majority of perpetrators escape both criminal justice and social service processes altogether. van Niekerk (2002) further highlights possible effects of weaknesses in the child protection system when recounting how a doctor who practiced in a rural area in South Africa shared that reporting incidents of rape in the area was pointless. The doctor’s opinion was based on experiences related to police granting bail for offenders who then returned to the community and intimidated the victims to withdraw charges (van Niekerk, 2002). Marshall and Herman (2000) refer to many perpetrators walking free and to lack of intervention services as contributing factors behind a rape culture in South

Africa. The main reason for this is that it creates opportunities for child sexual abuse. Both families and perpetrators are aware of this and are influenced by it in terms of decision-making (Marshall & Herman, 2000).

The child protection system includes practitioners who deal with reported cases of child sexual abuse as well as the legal framework and the policies that guide these practitioners. The child protection system includes social services, protection services, placements, psycho-social support and prevention. All these services have been under-resourced historically in South Africa and continue to be insufficiently funded (Loffell, 2004). Loffell (2004) argues that the child protection system is stretched beyond its limits as cases of child sexual abuse are escalating. This in turn leads to cases of child sexual abuse not being dealt with adequately and effectively (Loffell, 2004). Loffell (2004, p. 256) points out absurdity with regards to the lack of funding and resources for child protection services as the issue of child sexual abuse is seen as a “national crisis”. Loffell (2004) highlights dangers related to carrying out prevention programmes which aim to encourage community members to report child sexual abuse if issues within the community related to accessing child protection services have not been addressed. Reporting child sexual abuse without access to sufficient services may mean that more harm than good comes to the child and the child may be left increasingly vulnerable (Loffell, 2004). The researcher concludes that prevention programmes need to coincide with overall improvements within the greater child protection system in order to sufficiently protect children. Loffell (2004) also indicates that prevention strategies need to include other methods than solely encouraging families to report cases of child sexual abuse since there are serious weaknesses in the child protection system.

Prevention programmes in relation to child sexual abuse also face the challenge of lack of funding and resources. The social service component of the child protection system is supposed to deliver preventative programmes in order to strengthen families and communities and assist in preventing sexual abuse. In reality this merely remains a good intention as it is set to fail due to lack of funding. Preventative services are mainly supposed to be delivered by family welfare non-governmental organisations and it is very difficult to access state funding for child protective services. The trend indicates a decrease in state funding for non-governmental

organisations at the same time as these organisations are facing increasing challenges in accessing funding outside of government (Loffell, 2004). September (2004) also touches on this issue when drawing attention to the need for Department of Social Development to allocate budgets that allow for the implementation of programmes that are contained in policy documents.

2.12 Preventative practice in relation to child sexual abuse

Jewkes et al. (2005) highlight that the global knowledge base is limited concerning risk factors and prevention strategies in relation to child rape. This knowledge base is particularly weak in the African continent. Bagley and Thurston (1996) present three levels of prevention of child sexual abuse of which primary prevention and secondary prevention are of relevance to the study. Primary prevention is relevant as it aims to prevent the occurrence of child sexual abuse. These intervention strategies involve programmes directed at potential perpetrators and victims. Early identification and intervention with regards to issues in families that may lead to abuse and that render children vulnerable are also part of primary prevention. Strategies also include those that target socio-cultural factors that render children vulnerable to sexual abuse. Other strategies address risk factors in the environment and children's vulnerability to sexual abuse (Burkhardt & Rotatori, 1995). Secondary prevention is relevant as it revolves around preventing the negative impact on children in cases where child sexual abuse has occurred. Prevention programmes are aimed at ensuring that proper and supportive responses are given to children when they report child sexual abuse to an adult. It also involves professional services that are rendered to the child and his/her family after the abuse has occurred (Bagley & Thurston, 1996).

Bagley and Thurston (1996) write that school-based, child-directed prevention programmes are the most common strategy used for preventing child sexual abuse. This approach involves giving children knowledge about sexual abuse and skills in self-protection with the aim of the child avoiding and escaping sexual abuse. These programmes have been shown to improve children's knowledge and understanding of child sexual abuse but there are also many weaknesses attributed to educational programmes targeted at children. Criticism is directed at these programmes

generally only dealing with potential sexual abuse by strangers whilst it is proven that the majority of perpetrators are known by the child. Others question whether it can be expected that children are able to protect themselves from sexual abuse as at many times it involves the abuse of adult power (Bagley and Thurston, 1996). Collings (2007) also questions the relevance of school-based sexual abuse programmes, in a developing country such as South Africa, as much of the literature regarding such programmes comes from the United States. Marshall and Herman (2000) argue that prevention programmes which aim to teach children to report sexual abuse to an adult they can trust are not applicable in disadvantaged communities. One of the main reasons for this is the experienced powerlessness among adults in disadvantaged communities which filters down to their children. This powerlessness is also closely linked to challenges of access to services and opportunities (Marshall & Herman, 2000). Thakkar-Kolar, Ryan, Runyon, Kenny, and Capri (2008) are in support of child sexual abuse protection programmes which generally aim to increase children's self-esteem, their ability to say no and differentiate between acceptable and non-acceptable touch. Bolen (2003) on the other hand questions efficiency of this approach based on doubts regarding the possibility of preparing children for the various methods used by perpetrators. September (2004) points out that there is a need for prevention strategies that teach children to disclose abuse. Killian and Brakarsh (2004) add that the need in South Africa is to build resilience in children through programmes that enhances self-esteem and problem solving skills.

Critics of the child-directed prevention programmes emphasise that the responsibility of protecting the child from child sexual abuse lies with parents and caregivers, especially with regards to young children. Some school-based programmes attempt to involve parents of children. The importance of targeting parents in prevention programmes is widely accepted. These programmes are however often challenged by poor attendance and it has proven especially difficult to involve and engage fathers in matters related to child sexual abuse. The key to this approach is the belief that healthy children rely on adults to protect them and guide them in situations that are out of their understanding due to their developmental ability. It is further based on the view that children in many ways are not developmentally ready to understand and protect themselves from sexual abuse. The approach relies on a good and

open relationship between the parent/carer and the child. The main reason for the importance of a close and open relationship is that it enables the child to communicate his/her confusing experiences or concerns (Bagley &Thurston, 1996). The home environment needs to allow for the child to share experiences related to sexual abuse. The adult can provide an opportunity for this to take place by engaging with the child through gentle questions and attentive listening. Educating parents/carers about how to respond to reports by children of child sexual abuse is also an important part of prevention. It is vital that the response does not include blame and added guilt on the child (Bagley &Thurston, 1996). Killian and Brakarsh (2004) highlight the need for educational workshops in South Africa with adults to include information about abuse and communication around this topic both within families and within the community. Marshall and Herman (2000) seem to agree as they point to the need of working with parents and teachers in relation to responding to disclosure of child abuse.

Another strategy includes community forums where equipped adults can respond to cases of child abuse (Marshall & Herman, 2000). Loffell (2004) points out that prevention programmes in South Africa need to strengthen families. This view is shared by Madu (2003) who argues that prevention needs to focus on supporting vulnerable children and families to reduce risk factors related to abuse. Marshall and Herman (2000) highlight the need to address the fact that families are traumatised due to poverty, violence and daily trauma. This will enhance protection of children as many traumatised families fail to prioritise child abuse as something they need to attend to (Marshall & Herman, 2000).

Literature from as early as 1984 refers to the need to protect children from sexual abuse within the community. The community can either fail the child by ignoring the prevalence of sexual abuse or ensure the wellbeing of the child by taking the plight of sexually abused children seriously (Porter, 1984). Killian and Brakarsh (2004) add to this by highlighting that the answer to addressing many factors that relate to child sexual abuse lies within the community. Herman and Van den Heever (2010) point out that there is a huge need for community interventions in order to keep children safe from sexual abuse in South Africa. Community based approaches are gaining increased recognition as having the potential to contribute to developing

interventions that incorporate the influence of socio-cultural factors. The development of community interventions and community based programmes in relation to preventing sexual abuse are highly relevant to the field of social work as these values form part of the history of social work (Bagley &Thurston, 1996). Community based approaches are also relevant as western programmes that are being used in Southern Africa sometimes lack applicability to the socio-cultural context of the community. These programmes do not incorporate distinctive needs, cultures and strengths inherent in African communities (Plummer & Njuguna, 2009).The tribal authority and its practices are critical in terms of addressing issues in relation to child sexual abuse but also in relation to enhancing the protection of children from child sexual abuse (Rithcher & Dawes, 2008). September (2004) and Jewkes et al. (2005) refer to the need to address gender inequality and discrimination of women and children. Preventative programmes also need to target men in relation to developing healthy sexual practices among men (Jewkes et al., 2005; September, 2004). Collings (2007) points to the need for a paradigm shift in terms of prevention programmes to focus on the cause of the problem rather than solely the symptoms. This shift should include focus on practices, beliefs and attitudes that serve, condone or justify child sexual abuse. It is further a matter of promoting healthy relationship patterns which stand in opposition to sexual offending patterns (Collings, 2007). The discussion and development of prevention programmes other than child centred approaches are still in its early stages and that there seem to be a demand for the implementation of such programmes in South Africa.

Loffell (2004) points out that the main way forward in terms of tackling the issue of child sexual abuse in South Africa lie in preventative interventions that aim to achieve safer communities and that aim to strengthen families. In this vein, Loffell (2004, p. 257) writes that: *In neighbourhoods with high unemployment, high levels of substance abuse, lack of proper accommodation, no safe playing spaces for children, no provision for the care of children while their caregivers are working and general demoralisation and social decay, it is not very effective to try and process every case of child abuse through criminal and/or children's courts.*" Madu (2003) and September (2004) also point to the importance of creating safe communities for children and of supporting vulnerable families. Mbambo and Phiyega (2004, p. 12)

write: *“we still face huge challenges to enable the family institution to succeed as it should. The family is the building block of society and our greatest fulfilment as human beings lies there”*. Mbambo and Phiyega (2004) continue by suggesting solutions that firstly need to be implemented in meso level. The researcher has chosen to present some of these suggestions that specifically relates to the challenges in the lives of families that have been presented in this chapter. Mbambo and Phiyega (2004) propose that the government need to develop and implement a Family Policy in South Africa which ensures:

- Partnerships involving government, non-governmental organisations, community based organisations and indigenous leadership
- Resources need be allocated and distributed to institutions that serve families especially commitment of financial resources and capacity building for local structures that are best placed to support and strengthen families.
- Developing and building culturally appropriate models of family support
- Economic development
- The implementation of all policies and legal provisions that impact families

2.13 Conclusion

Children are rendered vulnerable to child sexual abuse, as various socio-cultural factors such as the legacy of apartheid, poverty and HIV/AIDS, influence parents protection of their children. Families' responses to child sexual abuse are influenced by how they perceive the phenomenon and stigma in relation to child sexual abuse in the community. The way that families respond to child sexual abuse is also determined by cultural practices in the community and the lack of child protection services in the community.

There is a need for prevention strategies in South Africa which encompasses locally relevant factors which renders children vulnerable to child sexual abuse.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter includes an outline and discussion regarding the research method utilised in the study. The appropriateness of all aspects of the research method, including research design, sampling, data collection and data analysis, are presented. The chapter further seeks to explain and account for the methodological research process. This includes a discussion with regards to credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability as the criteria of trustworthiness.

3.2. Research methods

The research study applied a qualitative approach in order to adequately uncover the experiences and perceptions of family members and community leaders in relation to child sexual abuse. The researcher found a qualitative approach best suited to achieving the overall aim and specific objectives of the study. Gray (2009) points out that a qualitative approach is well suited when seeking the perceptions of the participants and attempting to understand their actions. Sarantakos (2005) further refers to the value of using a qualitative approach, rather than a quantitative approach, when the knowledge of the research subject is limited and the variables in relation to the phenomenon cannot be identified in advance. The researcher notes that this is relevant in relation to the study as there is limited locally relevant research in relation to child sexual abuse (Babatsikos, 2010; Lachman, 2004; Townsend & Dawes, 2004). Rubin and Babbie (2011) point to how this approach promotes rich understanding as it is not limited to variables anticipated in advance. The researcher found that socio-cultural factors influencing families' protection of children from sexual abuse needed to be explored, rather than determined beforehand, in order to achieve rich understanding of the phenomenon. Qualitative methods are also well suited for studies where the research subject is best understood from the inside and for when the study aims to understand the participants' reality through seeking their perspectives (Sarantakos, 2005). This lead the researcher to believe that families' protection of children from sexual abuse needed to be understood from the

perspective of families and the community. Thus the study sought to explore and describe the issue of protection of children from child sexual abuse as experienced and perceived by families and the community. The researcher concluded that the use of qualitative methods were best suited for this study as it sought the participants' experiences and perceptions of child sexual abuse in order to understand their actions in relation to child sexual abuse. This approach was further applicable as the study sought the participants' explanations of their actions in relation to child sexual abuse. Another reason for the choice of a qualitative approach was that it would allow the researcher to explore non pre-determined variables that influence families' protection of young children from sexual abuse.

Another aspect with regards to the applicability of qualitative methods refers to how it relates to social constructionism as a theoretical framework for the study. Lock and Strong (2010) argue that a qualitative approach is suitable in order to gain insight in to participants' social constructions. This was seen as highly relevant to the study as it sought to explore social constructions in relation to child sexual abuse. Qualitative techniques are also favoured with regards to gathering information from clients and using this information to guide practice (Lock & Strong, 2010; Rubin & Babbie, 2011; Silverman, 1997). This applied to the research project as the intention was to utilise qualitative research techniques to secure a wealth of rich data. The researcher believed that this data would be valuable in terms of guiding preventative practice in relation to child sexual abuse.

3.3 Research design

Research design can be understood as the formula chosen by the researcher in order to best achieve the research goals (Fouché, Delport, & de Vos, 2011). The suitable formula within qualitative inquiries is related to strategies, traditions of inquiry, and approaches used as assistance and guidelines throughout the research process. The researcher found that a phenomenological approach would best suit the research project as it focused on lived experiences of the phenomena of child sexual abuse. This entailed trying to understand families' protection of children from sexual abuse on their terms and describing their experiences (Fouché & Schurink, 2011). The design hereby included descriptive elements as it generated different

descriptions of how families protect their children from sexual abuse. The study's design also consisted of exploratory elements as it ventured in to a relatively unknown area (Durrheim, 2008).

3.4 KwaNzimakwe as locale of the study

The rationale for choosing KwaNzimakwe as the locale of the study was discussed in chapter one. One reason for choosing to conduct the study in KwaNzimakwe was that KwaNzimakwe provided a context for the study where factors that are seen to increase vulnerability among children in South Africa and the developing world are present and highly relevant. The researcher did however find it to be a challenge to locate demographic statistics from KwaNzimakwe. She believes that this will be possible when Census 2011 is available. It is however possible to illustrate social challenges facing KwaNzimakwe by referring to common issues facing traditional areas in Hibiscus Coast Municipality (KwaNzimakwe, KwaXolo, KwaNdwalane, KwaMadlala, KwaMavundla and KwaLushaba). Below is a list of some of these social challenges:

- Limited access to basic needs and services
- Inadequate infrastructure (e.g. roads and electricity network)
- Limited economic growth
- High levels of unemployment and poverty
- Sickly and dying work force
- Growing levels of crime
- Vulnerability to disasters
- High debtors / rate defaulters
- High number of unemployed youth, who cannot afford tertiary education

(Adapted from Hibiscus Coast Municipality, 2012/13, p11)

3.5 Sampling

3.5.1 Sampling technique

The overall purpose with regards to applied sampling techniques in qualitative research relates to collecting rich data, which contains broad and diverse information of the research topic (Strydom & Delport, 2011). Applied sampling techniques should be used in order to seek out individuals, groups and settings which allow the subject to be studied (Rubin & Babbie, 2011). Thus the sampling techniques allowed the following to be studied: (1) the process of families protecting their children from sexual abuse and (2) families' responses to child sexual abuse. An opportunity to collect rich data was achieved through selecting (1) family members with past experience of child sexual abuse, (2) mothers and fathers willing to discuss child sexual abuse and (3) community leaders willing to discuss child sexual abuse. Rubin and Babbie (2011) point out that non-probability sampling is the only possible and appropriate option with regards to many research topics within the field of social work and therefore most commonly used. The researcher found this to be true with regards to the sensitive and many times hidden topic of child sexual abuse. An overview of the non-probability sampling techniques used in the study appeared in chapter one.

3.5.2 Sampling process for individual interviews

Family members with past experience of child sexual abuse were derived from the case load of a community based organisation in KwaNzimakwe. These family members were recruited to participate in individual interviews. The field workers from the organisation assisted in recruiting these family members. The researcher held a meeting with the staff team of the organisation to present the aim of the study, the research plan, and the role of the field workers in selecting participants for the study. The following criteria of selecting the sample were utilised:

- Families with experiences of child sexual abuse involving victims under the age of 12

- Families with past experiences of child sexual abuse, less recent than two years
- Various family members above the age of 18, from each family with past experiences of child sexual abuse
- Family members with varied responses to child sexual abuse

The fact that the field workers were studying social work and had experience of working with cases of child sexual abuse meant that they grasped the purpose of the study and the guidelines that were given by the researcher. The field workers selected family members in accordance with the above mentioned criteria and linked the researcher with families that were available and willing to participate in the study.

3.5.3 Sampling process for focus groups

Parents willing to discuss child sexual abuse were recruited for focus group discussions through the assistance of four crèches in close proximity to the community based organisation mentioned above. The researcher used the teachers in the crèches to recruit parents for the study. The teachers were asked to use the following criteria when selecting the sample:

- Parents of children at the crèche representing a variety of age groups
- Parents willing to participate in a group discussion with regards to child sexual abuse
- Ten mothers and ten fathers

Community leaders represented by tribal leaders, church leaders and traditional healers were recruited with the assistance of one tribal leader, one church leader and one traditional healer known by the researcher. The researcher met with the community leaders who assisted in recruiting others and explained the aim of the study and the research plan.

3.6 Method of data collection

An interview can be defined as a social relationship where exchange of information takes place. Through the interview the researcher gathers information through direct interchange with an individual or a group (Greeff, 2011). The researcher conducted individual semi-structured interviews in order to derive participants' personal experiences of responding to, and protecting children from, sexual abuse. Focus group interviews were conducted in order to derive (1) perceptions of child sexual abuse among families and community leaders, (2) responses among families in relation to child sexual abuse and (3) protection mechanisms with regards to child sexual abuse among families.

Individual interviews were conducted with participants with past experiences of child sexual abuse. The researcher believed that this format would be less inhibiting as Kelly (2008b) point out that individual interviews are best suited for addressing sensitive and personal experiences. Another reason for utilising individual semi-structured interviews relates to its suitability in seeking detailed accounts, as it allows flexibility for following up and clarifying issues with the participants (Kelly, 2008b). Thus the researcher decided that the individual interview format would provide the best environment for the participants to share their experiences of child sexual abuse. The format also allowed for the participants to tell their story in accordance with Greeff (2011). Czarniawska (2004) points out that it is very common for interviewees to respond to questions with narratives if they are given room to speak. The researcher found that the participants were most comfortable to share experiences when they were given an opportunity to share their story. The semi-structured interview allowed the participants room to share their story in a manner that best suited them. Czarniawska (2004) highlight that narratives present perceptions and insight into how individuals interpret the world. This proved true in terms of the current research study as the participants' stories in relation to child sexual abuse included perceptions in relation to child sexual abuse and accounts of how the participants relate to child sexual abuse.

Focus group interviews were conducted as the researcher believed that the group setting would assist the participants to articulate their thoughts and empower them to voice their opinions. It was also more likely that the participants would share

information around a sensitive topic such as child sexual abuse, as they would feel safer within the group than in a one to one interview (Liamputtong, 2011; Morgan, 1998). The researcher utilised a topic guide with probes which were based on previous research and findings from the individual interviews. The use of probes encouraged discussion in the group and allowed the researcher to follow up on findings from the individual interviews. Greeff (2011, p. 341) states: *“Things that are not likely to emerge in the one-to-one interview are more likely to come out in focus groups, because group dynamics can be a catalytic factor in bringing information to the fore”*. The researcher found that the use of individual interviews and the use of focus group discussion complemented one another.

3.7 Pilot Study

The pilot study was conducted in order for the researcher to test the interview guide and to make necessary modifications (Strydom & Delport, 2011). For the purpose of the pilot study, the researcher conducted an individual interview with one family member with past experience of child sexual abuse. A semi-structured interview guide was used and the researcher conducted the interview with the assistance of a translator.

The researcher concluded that the use of a semi-structured interview guide was effective in order to elicit qualitative information from the participant in accordance with the research objectives and questions. The researcher did however find that the semi-structured interview guide did not provide sufficient closure to the interview. The researcher therefore ended the interview by allowing the participants to express their needs for follow up services and by allowing the participant to speak freely on the topic of giving advice to other families in relation to protecting children from child sexual abuse. This ending provided the researcher with valuable information from the participants as well as allowing for adequate closure to the interview. The researcher consequently adjusted the interview guide to include these two topics in the end.

The pilot study revealed that the use of a translator during the individual interview disturbed the natural flow of the interview and seemed to discourage the participant

in sharing narrative accounts of experiences. The decision was therefore made in consultation with the supervisor to use a Zulu-speaking research assistant to conduct the individual interviews rather than the researcher conducting the interviews.

3.8 Process of data collection

The data collection process followed a planned order which started with completion of individual interviews. The researcher then paused in the data collection to allow for initial analysis of the data collected in the individual interviews. This order meant that the researcher was able to follow up on initial findings from the individual interviews during the focus group discussion.

The individual interviews were conducted at locations that proved to be the most convenient for the participants. This occurred either at their homes or on one occasion in the researcher's car. A consent form was signed prior to the interviews (Appendix E and F). The researcher also sought permission to record the interviews. This request was made in order to obtain a clear account of the interview and in order to preserve actual occurrence of what was said during the interview (Silverman, 2011). All but two participants agreed to the interview being recorded. Participants' requests of not using a tape recorder were respected. In the two instances where participants requested a tape recorder not to be used, the research assistant took notes. The research assistant further transcribed as much of the participants responses as quickly as possible in order not to compromise the research data. The interview sessions were conducted in Zulu and the interviews lasted for approximately 1 hour.

The individual interviews were conducted by a research assistant. The researcher accompanied the research assistant to the interview and met with the participant to explain the research. The researcher chose to do this in order to give the participants a face behind the research project. After the research had been satisfactorily explained the researcher left the room as she believed that having one interviewer would be less inhibiting for the participant.

Four of the focus group interviews were conducted at the centre for the community based organisation, as this proved to be a central meeting point of convenience for the participants. The focus groups with the tribal leaders were conducted at the tribal court as they normally convene there. Consent forms were signed prior to the interviews (Appendix G and H). The researcher sought permission to record the interviews and all participants agreed to this request. The sessions were conducted in Zulu and the interviews lasted for approximately one and half to two hours. The research assistant facilitated the focus group discussion while the researcher was present to observe.

3.9 Data analysis

Schurink, Fouché and de Vos (2011, p.399) states that qualitative data analysis is: *“first and foremost, a process of inductive reasoning, thinking and theorising”*. The researcher used interpretative analysis in order to gain thorough descriptions of the characteristics, processes, transactions and contexts that constitute the phenomena of child sexual abuse (Terre Blanche et al., 2008). The researcher analysed the data in order to sort, organise and reduce it into manageable pieces in order to interpret the data (Schurink, Fouché, & de Vos, 2011). This process followed steps outlined by (Terre Blanche et al., 2008).

3.9.1 Familiarisation and immersion

The researcher ensured that the research assistant transcribed and translated data as soon as possible following each interview session. The researcher read the transcribed interviews as soon as she received them and continuously throughout the research process. This allowed for the researcher to make sure that there were no gaps in the collected data and gave her a preliminary understanding of the content. Upon completion of data collection, the transcripts were read as a whole several times.

3.9.2 Inducing themes

The researcher organised the data with the use of index cards and divided it in to suitable text units. The researcher analysed the data by focusing on emotions, cognitions and behaviours which appeared theoretically significant and related to the central research questions. Rubin and Babbie (2011) refer to this process as analytic as it seeks patterns and relationships. Through this process the researcher identified main themes and sub-themes. The researcher also explored consistencies and inconsistencies in the data (Schurink et al., 2011).

3.9.3 Coding

The coding in qualitative analysis focuses on identifying meanings and indicators of themes that each or together will explain the research topic (Rubin & Babbie, 2011). The researcher marked different sections of the data which illustrated and exemplified different themes.

3.9.4 Elaboration

Elaboration was done continuously by developing interrelationships within the data and by conceptualising these on different levels of abstraction. The researcher further ensured that accounts which correlated with each other were represented and that data that contradicted these accounts were represented in the analysis. This process also included comparing sections in the text that seemed to belong together. The researcher continuously returned to the process of inducing themes and coding.

3.9.5 Interpretation and checking

The researcher conceptualised the data in relation to a social constructionism approach, ecosystems theory and the literature reviewed. Data were also interpreted in relation to each other, subject positions and context. Reviewing demographic information and general information about the various cases of child sexual abuse became relevant during this stage in the process. The researcher made sure to step

away from the data in order to form a broader perspective. This involved reflection on her role both as collector and interpreter of data. The researcher discussed her role with her supervisor as part of this process. This proved important as the researcher works with cases of child sexual and was therefore emotionally invested. The fact that the researcher sought support from her supervisor and her work colleges meant that she was able to avoid letting emotional responses impact on the analysis.

3.10 Validity, reliability and trustworthiness

The general consensus within the field of qualitative research is that the conventional criteria, internal validity, external validity and reliability, fail to truly establish the “*truth value*” of qualitative studies (Schurink et al., 2011, p. 419). An alternative approach emphasises trustworthiness in terms of “*rigour and authenticity*” (Schurink et al., 2011, p. 421). Rubin and Babbie (2011) highlight that social constructivists see trustworthiness as important in terms of capturing multiple subjective realities rather than ensuring that an objective reality is captured. Credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability will be discussed below as the criteria of trustworthiness is well suited in terms of the study’s qualitative approach (Schurink et al., 2011).

3.10.1 Credibility

Credibility relates to how the research method produces accurate identification of the subject and how it ensures correct description of the subject. Gray (2009) highlights that there is always a risk of respondent bias as participants may provide an answer that they think the researcher is seeking. The researcher however applied “methodological triangulation” by using a variation of data gathering techniques (Gray, 2009, p. 193). This enhanced accurate identification of the subject, as it provided various perspectives on families’ protection of children from sexual abuse. It also allowed for comparison between accounts from various data sources. “Data triangulation” was also applied through the use of a range of sampling strategies and sources (Gray, 2009, p. 193). The researcher believed that this contributed to correct description of the subject, as it allowed the researcher to gather in depth data and

complex interrelated variables on various levels in the community. Credibility was also achieved as the data collection included one to two hour interviews and as the researcher engaged with the subject on the field over an extensive time period (Schurink et al., 2011). Member checks were carried out as the researcher allowed the participants to give feedback with regards to the research observations and interpretations. The researcher adapted a social constructivist approach to member checks and carried these out with the aim to determine whether the participants acknowledged that their realities were being portrayed (Rubin & Babbie, 2011). Accurate descriptions of the participants' experiences were also ensured by the use of probing and transcription of recorded data.

3.10.2 Transferability

Transferability refers to whether the research findings can be transferred from one situation to another (Rubin & Babbie, 2011). As the study used a qualitative approach it was not a matter of generalising the findings but rather a matter of tying the research into a theoretical body. The findings of the study are not representative of the population but rather include universal attributes (Rubin & Babbie, 2011). Thus the researcher sought to understand the findings in relation to universal social experiences and processes found in theory and previous research in accordance with Rubin and Babbie (2011). Clear links and accounts in relation to theoretical frameworks and previous research have been provided throughout the research report. This information may be useful for other researchers with regards to determining how the findings apply to other studies (Schurink et al., 2011). The research report provides clear biographical descriptions of the participants and their social context. The reason for including this information in the report was to increase the possibility of applying the findings of the study to other research and to others contexts (Gray, 2009).

3.10.3 Dependability

Dependability relates to whether the research process is logical and well documented (Schurink et al., 2011). The researcher kept thorough audit trails. This included clear accounts of data collection methods and analysis. All materials used

in the study were kept by the researcher (Gray, 2009). The researcher tried to illustrate the studies' logic by providing reasoning for the choices made throughout the research process.

3.10.4 Confirmability

Confirmability refers to clear illustration of the link between data and the researchers' interpretations. The researcher therefore included raw data such as transcribed interview notes within the research report (Gray, 2009). Confirmability further relates to the existence of evidence to support findings and interpretation in order for an audit to be possible. The researcher has saved a paper trail in case this will be requested by an auditor (Schurink et al., 2011).

3.11 Ethical considerations

The researcher considered two types of ethical responsibility: (1) the responsibility to those who participate in the study and (2) the responsibility to report the research accurately and honestly. As child sexual abuse is a sensitive topic the researcher adjusted research procedures in order to ensure that data were not collected at the expense of the participants. The researcher also made sure to solely collect sensitive and personal information which was relevant to the research goals. In-depth accounts concerning the actual events of the child sexual abuse were not extracted from the participants, as the researcher believed this to be irrelevant in investigating families' protection of children from sexual abuse. The researcher also identified that families who had current or recent experiences of child sexual abuse may be increasingly vulnerable. The decision was therefore made to only include families in the study that had experiences related to child sexual abuse less recently than two years (Strydom, 2011).

The research sought permission to conduct the research from the community based organisation that assisted in availing cases of child sexual abuse to the researcher (Appendix I). Ethical clearance from the University Ethics Committee was also obtained (Appendix J).

In consideration of the sensitive subject of child sexual abuse the researcher preformed the following ethical obligations:

- Ensured confidentiality of participants by the use of pseudonyms

Pseudonyms were allocated for each participant in order to ensure anonymity. The participants were assured that identifying research information would be kept confidential by both the researcher and the research assistant.

- Obtained informed consent from the participants

The researcher explained the research and its procedures to the participants who then signed an informed consent form. The informed consent form was written in Zulu in order to accommodate the participants. The consent form included the research goals, the duration required for participants' involvement, the research procedures, possible significant experiences related to partaking in the study and the credibility of the researcher (Strydom, 2011).

- Informed all participants of the voluntary involvement in the study

The researcher explained that the participants' involvement in the study was voluntary and that they could withdraw from the interview at any time if feeling uneasy. The research assistant did remind one participant of this alternative during an interview as the participant appeared visibly upset. The participant chose not to stop the interview but rather to take a short break.

- Allowed participants to freely choose the venue for the interview

The participants were given the option to choose a venue for the interview where they would feel the most comfortable and where they would not experience that their sense of privacy was threatened. Ten participants requested the interview to take place in their home, one participant requested the interview to take place in the researcher's vehicle and one participant requested the interview to take place in a hidden corner of his garden.

- Sought permission to use the tape-recorder

The researcher gave the participants the option to disallow the use of a tape recorder. The request by two participants with past experience of child sexual abuse not to use a tape recorder was respected.

- Discussed the safekeeping of transcripts

The participants were informed of the safekeeping of research material for a period of five years.

- Informed all participants of applicable child protection procedures

The participants were given a leaflet concerning child sexual abuse and protection procedures, in their mother tongue based on a resource book “Child sexual abuse, a guide for parents and carers” (Fox & Nkosi, 2003), for the purpose of providing them with referral sources should they require these. The participants were informed that any new cases of child sexual abuse that may be identified in or emerging from the interviews would be addressed by following the protocol in accordance with child protection procedures. The researcher, being a social worker, ensured that due process was followed and services provided.

- Offered debriefing, referrals for counselling or other services when the need arose

The researcher acknowledged the sensitive and traumatic effects of exploring child sexual abuse. The interviews covered a sensitive topic that had the potential to bring up personal past experiences of child sexual abuse, difficult memories or issues around child sexual abuse that had not been dealt with. The researcher applied the uttermost sensitivity and the participants were reminded that they could stop or postpone the interview at any time. The researcher offered onsite counselling and referred the participants for on-going counselling to the community based organisation or to other relevant services, when needed or when requested by

participants. The resource book “Child sexual abuse, a guide for parents and carers” offered a useful tool for ongoing work with the family members by staff at the community based organisation. The majority of the participants with past experiences of child sexual abuse required both counselling, other services and/or assistance by the community based organisation to follow up on issues related to the alleged cases of child sexual abuse.

3.12 Limitations of the study

- The main challenge was the language barrier as the study was conducted in KwaNzimakwe, where the majority of the populations’ first language is Zulu and the second language is English. The researcher is fluent in English but only has limited understanding and communication skills in Zulu. The researcher believed that it was vital for the participants to communicate in their first language. The researcher therefore attempted to overcome the language barrier by using a Zulu-speaking research assistant. The research assistant conducted the individual interviews and facilitated the focus group discussions. The skills of the interviewer are very important for the quality of the interview (Greeff, 2011). Thus the researcher ensured that the interviewer had applicable skills by using a social auxiliary worker and by training the research assistant. The research assistant had experience of facilitation and knowledge of the research problem.
- The challenge of language also meant that the researcher had to use the research assistant to transcribe the interviews as these were conducted in Zulu. The research assistant consequently transcribed the interviews and translated the transcripts in to English. The research assistant translated the transcripts as there was no research budget to pay a professional translator. The researcher on the other hand believes that the fact that the research assistant was from the same community as the participants meant that she was able to capture the essence of what was said. The researcher also ensured that randomly selected parts of the transcripts and translations were checked by a third party to ensure accuracy.

- There is always a possibility that participants withhold information or respond in a socially acceptable manner. The researcher believes that the fact that the research assistant is a field worker was an advantage in this regard as she was known and trusted in the community. This meant that the research assistant had an advantage in terms of gaining participants' trust during the interview. This promoted openness and honesty. Thus the researcher believes that the participants were less likely to withhold information from the interviewer.
- The fact that the study was conducted in a disadvantage area proved to pose a challenge in terms of ensuring follow up services for the participants. The participants stories included various experiences related to the need for support and services, which the researcher in turn was ethically obligated to ensure. This proved to be a taxing but valuable process. It was taxing as the researcher went to great lengths to ensure follow up, and valuable in the sense that the participants received increased support in comparison to before they participated in the research project.
- A limitation of the study was that the researcher did not access families with experiences of child sexual abuse who had failed to report the incidence. The focus group discussions did however give insight in to elements related to these types of responses by families.
- Another limitation was that the researcher mainly accessed female family members with experiences of child sexual abuse. The researcher will however later discuss this in relation to trends which indicate that females carry the main responsibility in protecting children from sexual abuse. The community leaders that participated in the study were all males. Thus the findings of the study will include male perspectives as well as female perspectives.

The researcher concludes that measures were taken in order to counter challenges and limitations with regards to the current research project. The taxing task of

ensuring follow up services for the participants can be said to in itself illustrate one of the core challenges in relation to families' experiences of protecting their children from sexual abuse. The participants' first hand experiences in terms of the task of protecting their children from sexual abuse will be presented in chapter four. The researcher has however in the course of the research project, experienced how easy it is to despair when trying to access sufficient legal and social services, for families and victims of child sexual abuse.

3.13 Conclusion

This chapter outlined and discussed the research method utilised in the study and its appropriateness. The following chapter will explore and describe themes which emerged from the individual interviews and the focus group discussions.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the results of the study in KwaNzimakwe in KwaZulu-Natal. It includes an in-depth analysis and discussion of the results from individual interviews with family members with past experiences of child sexual abuse, of focus group discussions with community leaders and of focus group discussions with parents in the community.

The first part of the chapter will provide background information with the purpose of enhancing insight into families', community leaders' and parents' experiences of child sexual abuse. Information in relation to the interviews with family members with past experiences of child sexual abuse will cover demographics about the participants and the households of the victims of child sexual abuse. It will also include demographics about victims and perpetrators pertinent to the six cases of child sexual abuse represented in the study.

The second part of the chapter will include an analysis of the themes that emerged from the data. Actual words and opinions of research participants will be presented in line with the study's qualitative approach. The analysis will be guided by social constructionism and ecosystems theory. In keeping with the purpose of the study, the focus will be on how families construct meaning from their protection of children from sexual abuse and how the social environment influences families' protection of children from sexual abuse. Further, the analysis of the themes relate to the objectives which were outlined in chapter one. The literature reviewed in chapter two will also be utilised in order to support or contradict the themes and the results of the study as a whole.

There were two samples in this study. The first sample comprised 12 family members with past experience of child sexual abuse. These participants were

referred to the study by a community based organisation in KwaNzimakwe, KwaZulu-Natal through non-probability purposive and availability sampling. The second sample compromised 20 community leaders and 14 parents from the community, who were willing to discuss child sexual abuse in a group setting. The community leaders were recruited for the study through snowball sampling, through community leaders known by the researcher mobilising other candidates for the focus group discussions.

The parent sample was recruited through non-probability purposive and availability sampling as parents known by two local crèches and parents known by the community based organisation were recruited for the focus group discussion. Thus the sample did not solely comprise parents of children who from crèches.

In accordance with ethical requirements, participants provided verbal and written consent. Pseudo names have been used for all participants and all parties mentioned during the interviews throughout the report in order to preserve confidentiality and anonymity of the participants, in accordance with the ethical requirements presented in chapter three. This chapter analyses results from individual interviews and focus group interviews together, as these results interlink and feed in to each other.

4.2 Background information in relation to individual interviews

4.2.1 Demographic information about participants

The following tables present information about the family members that participated in individual interviews (N=12). These participants had experience of six different cases of alleged child sexual abuse.

Table 1: Participant Details - Case one

Participant Details	Agnes	Mbali	Rose
Relationship to child	Grandmother	Mother	Grandmother
Age	55	31	53
Occupation	Self- employed	Student	Employed

Living in the same household as child victim	Yes	No	Yes
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Table 2: Participant Details - Case two

Participant Details	Lindiwe	Sylvia
Relationship to child	Grandmother	Aunt
Age	63	25
Occupation	Pensioner	Employed
Living in the same household as child victim	Yes	Yes

Table 3: Participant Details – Case three

Participant Details	Thandiwe	Phumlani
Relationship to child	Mother	Father
Age	31	32
Occupation	Unemployed	Employed
Living in the same household as child victim	Yes	No

Table 4: Participant Details - Case four

Participant Details	Mpume	Anele
Relationship to child	Mother	Grandmother
Age	32	64
Occupation	Unemployed	Pensioner
Living in the same household as child victim	Yes	Yes

The grandmother of the victim of case four further shared about her past experiences of child sexual abuse in relation to an incidence where her daughter allegedly was sexually abused by her husband. The overview above does not include information about this incidence but her experiences and accounts will be included in the second part of this chapter.

Table 5: Participant Details - Case five

Participant Details	Zodwa	Lwandile
Relationship to child	Mother	Father
Age	45	55

Occupation	Unemployed	Employed
Living in the same household as child victim	Yes	Yes

Table 6: Participant Details - Case six

Participant Details	Ntombifuthi
Relationship to child	Mother
Age	40
Occupation	Employed
Living in the same household as child victim	Yes

The sample compromised two men and 10 women. Thus women represented the majority of family members with experiences of child sexual abuse accessed through the community based organisation. The cases known by the organisation produced mainly women who were willing to participate in the study as they had been involved in dealing with the incidence of child sexual abuse. The researcher notes that this indicates a similar trend of women taking the most active role in protecting children from sexual abuse as highlighted by Jewkes et al. (2005).

4.2.2 Demographic information of victims and perpetrators

The following table provides information in relation to the victims and the perpetrators of the six cases of child sexual abuse represented in the study (N=12). This is solely a presentation of information provided by the family members that participated in the individual interviews. Two possible perpetrators are relayed in relation to case one as different family members provided different accounts of the identity of the perpetrator.

Table 7: Victim and Perpetrator Details

Victim and Perpetrator Details	Case 1	Case 2	Case 3	Case 4	Case 5	Case 6
Age of victim	4	8	6	12	12	4
Gender of victim	Female	Female	Female	Female	Male	Female

Relationship between victim and perpetrator	Father/Unknown	Community member	Community member	Stepfather	Neighbour	Neighbour
Number of perpetrators	1	4	1	1	1	1
Gender of perpetrator	Male/Unknown	Males	Male	Male	Male	Male
Age group of perpetrator	Adult/Unknown	Minors	Adult	Adult	Minor	Minor
Perceived whereabouts of perpetrator	Present in Community /Unknown	Present in Community	Present in Community	In prison	Present in Community	Present in Community

4.2.3 Demographic information of households

The following table presents demographic information of the household of the victim of child sexual abuse attributed to the six cases of child sexual abuse represented in the study. Case one relays information about two different households as the victim stayed in both of these households.

Table 8: Households Details

Household Details	Case 1	Case 2	Case 3	Case 4	Case 5	Case 6
Head of Household	Grand-mother and Grand-mother	Grand-mother	Grand-father	Grand-mother	Father	Mother
Number of people	5 and 4	5	7	16	4	7
Number of adults	2 and 3	2	2	10	2	4
Number of children	3 and 1	3	5	6	2	3
Monthly income	Unknown and R 1500	R 1200	R 1400	R 2550	R 2000	R 2000

4.3 Background information in relation to focus groups

4.3.1 Community leaders

The sample of community leaders included nine tribal leaders, six church leaders and five traditional healers. Recruiting and gathering tribal leaders for the focus group discussion proved to be straight forward as they already convened weekly. Although a sufficient number of church leaders and traditional healers had agreed to participate in the study, many of them did not to turn up for the actual appointment made for the group discussion. This happened on various occasions which resulted in the focus group being carried out with five traditional healers and six church leaders.

The sample of community leaders compromised six women and 14 men. The focus group of tribal leaders consisted of nine men and no women. The researcher concludes that this is representative of tribal leaders as they are all men. The church leaders compromised one woman and five men while the traditional healers compromised four women and one man.

4.3.2 Parents

The sample of parents consisted of eight mothers and six fathers. The number of fathers that participated was lower as it proved to be more of a challenge to access fathers who were willing to discuss child sexual abuse.

All the parents had young children below the age of 12. Some parents had only one child while other parents had up to seven children. The majority of the mothers lived with their biological children, while the majority of the fathers did not live with their biological children. The ages of the parents varied as the youngest father was in his twenties while the oldest mother was in her fifties.

4.4 Perceptions of child sexual abuse

The participants' accounts and experiences indicate perceptions of child sexual abuse in relation to how they defined the phenomenon and how they viewed victims and perpetrators. Participants also shared their views with regards to consequences of child sexual abuse.

4.4.1 Narrow definition of child sexual abuse

All the family members in the study referred to the incidences of alleged child sexual abuse as rape. Three focus groups solely defined child sexual abuse as an adult having sex with a child and all groups mainly defined child sexual abuse along this line. The following quotes illustrate how family members and group members referred to child sexual abuse.

Mbali: *"They checked and we found out that she had really been raped."*

Phumlani: *"My child is not the first one that this guy raped."*

Church leaders: *"I think it is when children, boys and girls, are being forced by older men to sleep with them."*

Traditional healers: *"It is when a person sleeps with a child."*

Tribal leaders: *"I believe that child sexual abuse is sleeping with the child. I am not talking about sleeping with the child maybe next to you. It is using your private part putting it in the child when that is not meant to happen."*

The fact that three groups out of five seemed to understand child sexual abuse as involving penetration point to that this is the main way in which child sexual abuse is perceived in the community. This indicates what Collings (2005) calls a narrow definition of child sexual abuse. Collings (2005) argues that a narrow definition of child sexual abuse is one that solely defines it as involving penetration. Hence the participants' accounts seem to indicate a narrow definition of child sexual abuse. Individuals who apply a narrow definition may not acknowledge the occurrence of other forms of child sexual abuse according to Collings (2005). It is significant to note that the cases which were represented in the study were referred to as rape by the victims' families. This indicates that other forms of child sexual abuse were not discovered to the same extent. The reason for this may be that these incidences were not viewed as child sexual abuse. This can be understood from a social constructionism perspective which states that peoples' views and understanding

determine certain behavioural patterns and exclude others (Burr, 2003). Thus if families' understanding of child sexual abuse is restricted to rape it also means that they only will identify and act to protect their children in these instances. This reasoning further corresponds with other studies (Babatsikos, 2010; Ige & Fawole, 2011) which highlight that families' perceptions of child sexual abuse determine how they protect their children.

4.4.2 Awareness of potential victims of child sexual abuse

Some of the family members with experiences of child sexual abuse expressed that they never had anticipated the possibility of a child from their family being sexually abused or becoming a victim of child sexual abuse. The group of mothers who participated in the study also expressed similar thoughts in terms of families' inclination not to perceive child sexual abuse as a potential risk. This is exemplified in the following quotes.

Zodwa: *"Because he is a boy I never thought something like this could happen to him."*

Lwandile: *"I was shocked because it was my first time hearing something like this happening to a boy."*

Sylvia: *"Because she was too young I did not think it would happen to her or that she would sleep with someone."*

Mothers: *"It is because we sometimes do not think that it might happen that someone can rape a child."*

The results showed that families tended to perceive the risk of child sexual abuse as minimal. This corresponds with findings by Ige and Fawole (2011) which indicated that parents did not believe that their own child was at risk of sexual abuse. Family members in the study appeared to perceive the risk of either males or young children being sexually abused as minimal. Families' limited understanding of potential victims of child sexual abuse can be seen as restrictive stereotyping (Stevens et al.,

2004), since it denies the factual reality of all children being potential victims of child sexual abuse. Social constructionists would argue that perceptions excluding males and young children as potential victims of child sexual abuse affect the way families protect children from sexual abuse. Thus families may be less attentive and protective in relation to child sexual abuse when it comes to males and young children.

4.4.3 Males as potential perpetrators of child sexual abuse

Participants' accounts showed perceptions of all men as perpetrators of child sexual abuse. Mothers shared that they believe that men sometimes are passive in relation to child sexual abuse due to the perpetrator being another male. Males in the study expressed that they felt that men who would never sexually abuse a child become labelled as potential perpetrators due to the actions of a few men in the community. The following quotes illustrate how group members referred to these types of perceptions of men.

Traditional healers: *"Men only think about raping and stabbing and they easily get angry."*

Mothers: *"It is because people who rape are men and they are also men. Maybe they become ashamed that men can do such things."*

Fathers: *"One rotten potato in a bag spoils the rest of the bag. When a father rapes his child all fathers are affected."*

Men's' experiences of being perceived as perpetrators and as bad fathers due to the actions of other men, confirms the point made by Posel (2005) that the issue of child sexual abuse puts focus on the failure of men. Mothers experienced that men distance themselves and do not act in cases of child sexual abuse, due to the threatening nature of the issue as it cast shame on men in general. This correlates with points made by Posel (2005) in relation to how slow responses to child sexual abuse historically relates to how the issue was experienced as a threat to manhood. The researcher concludes that this indicates the need to involve males in community

prevention programmes. The aim would be for men to not experience the issue of child sexual abuse as a threat but as a issue in the community which requires their input.

4.4.4 Consequences of child sexual abuse

Community leaders and parents identified that child sexual abuse affect childrens' mental health and may cause changes in their behaviour. Effects on the development of children are also mentioned as follows:

Tribal leaders: *"The consequence is that if a child is sexually abused you find that even their growth is affected. The child struggles to continue to grow fully the way other children grow."*

Fathers: *"A child might end up being mentally disturbed and lose concentration at school."*

Tribal leaders: *"The child loses its virginity. It also happens that he/she gets HIV. That is what you may find. Also you have killed/destroyed their future."*

Traditional healers: *"The child might end up being disturbed mentally."*

The results showed perceptions of child sexual abuse as a serious issue with detrimental consequences for the child victim. There are no indicators of stereotypes which relates to denial of abuse through minimising harmful consequences of child sexual abuse as defined by Stevens et al. (2004).

4.4 Discovering child sexual abuse

All the family members with experience of child sexual abuse who participated in the study had at some stage discovered the occurrence of child sexual abuse and found that the victim was a family member. There were however variations in terms of the process which led to the discovery. In some instances family members initially detected that the child was being sexually abused. Other scenarios included a

second party initially detecting the occurrence of child sexual abuse. Families' experiences show that a second party such as a community member or a community leader in many instances played an important role to aid in families' discovery of child sexual abuse. This corresponds with estimates by Collings (2008) which indicate that 42% of cases of child sexual abuse are detected through a second party.

4.5.1 Families investigation of indicators of child sexual abuse

Female family members shared how they identified signs of child sexual abuse and how they investigated these signs. The majority of the women described how they found physical signs that indicated to them that their child might have been sexually abused. These women investigated the signs by examining their children's private parts. Only one family member Anele shared how she investigated her suspicion of child sexual abuse based on a concern regarding behavioural changes in the child. Anele investigated her suspicion by looking for physical indicators of abuse and by seeking advice from other females. Parents in the community also showed awareness of physical indicators of child sexual abuse and the need to look for these signs as indicated below:

Agnes: "The first time she came to me and told me her private part was sore, I bathed her thinking that maybe she had played with soil and it went in. But she did not stop complaining about this. The third day I checked it out and I discovered that the child's private part looked different."

Anele: "I found my child lying down like she was sick. I did not understand because when I left her she was already awake. I did not see any sign that she was actually sick. I asked how she is and she insisted that she was ok. But I started to wonder when I asked my husband if the child had told him about not feeling ok. He said: "She said she is ok, why do I try to get her to say that she is not ok"

Anele:"I asked the child to go and fetch something in another room so I could see how weak she was. I then noticed that her legs were not coming together as usual when she was walking. I followed her to the next room and put her on the bed to look

at her private part. I was obvious to me when I saw that her panties were stained with blood.”

Mothers: *“You can see it if the child is bleeding in her/his private parts.”*

Fathers: *“Maybe mothers should make it a routine that to check their children regularly if they are still virgins so that she can be able to see when something has gone wrong.”*

The researcher notes that family members seem to believe that there will be physical signs of sexual abuse. This correlates with findings by Babatsikos (2010) in terms of a common misconception among parents that there will be physical signs of child sexual abuse. There is hereby a risk that other signs of sexual abuse are neglected and not investigated by families. This is highly relevant as Collings (2005) identifies that families can be seen to respond non-supportively by failing to take action when there are indicators of child sexual abuse. It also highlights the need to train family members on how to identify signs of child sexual abuse. This corresponds with the need highlighted by Killian and Brakarsh (2004) for educational workshops with adults regarding abuse in South Africa.

4.5.2 Community detection and reporting of child sexual abuse

The participants' accounts showed that the community play a role in detecting child sexual abuse and reporting cases to the victims' family. Family members described how they received reports of incidences of child sexual abuse where the perpetrator was a minor. Tribal leaders and church leaders confirmed that the community play a role in detecting child sexual abuse through identifying and reporting cases to the victims' families as follows:

Lwandile: *“I did not see anything. I only heard that the child has been raped from the neighbour.”*

Ntombifuthi: *“I came back from work and the children told me that there was a child that forced another child to rape my child. He did it because he hit him. Just after I*

heard that I was called to the neighbours and when I got there the parents were fighting and they told me the same story.”

Church leaders: *“There are many ways of identifying an abused child. I as a person who goes out and help in the community I come across these cases.”*

Tribal leaders: *“In cases like this I first find out how the incident happened. I then advise the family to contact the police if they have not been contacted so that they can get help before the child gets traumatised further.”*

The results indicate that the meso system in terms of the neighbourhood played an important role in enhancing the detection of what is defined by Burkhardt and Rotatori (1995) as sexual abuse perpetrated by an unrelated adult. Tribal leaders and church leaders within the exo system also played an important role in identifying child sexual abuse and in reporting the matter to the child's family. This corresponds with the opinion of Richter and Dawes (2008) of the tribal authority and its practices being critical in terms of addressing issues in relation to child sexual abuse. The tribal leaders and the church leaders seemed to view their main role as being one of reporting the case to the family and then advising them on how to respond.

4.5.3 Children disclosing child sexual abuse

All the stories by the 10 female family members consisting of mothers and grandmothers included accounts about how children came to disclose sexual abuse. All these accounts except the story by the mother, Thandiwe, included women probing the child to disclose the incidence of sexual abuse. None of the women probed the child to disclose child sexual abuse following suspicion of observed behavioural changes. Instead the women asked the child to tell them what had happened following observations of physical signs of child sexual abuse or reports by a second party. This is illustrated in the following quotes:

Zodwa: *“When I asked my child he said no. I kept asking him but he still said no. One day I slept together with him because I wanted to ask him when we were alone. And he told me the truth that their friend Bongani inserted his penis in their but holes.*

I asked him how it feels and he said it's painful. I asked if they cry he said yes but Bongani promises to strangle them when they cry."

Agnes: "After I became suspicious I asked her what happened and she told me her father touched her private part."

Thandiwe: "When she came back she told me there was a man who inserted a finger in her private part, I asked her where that man is now, and she pointed in the direction that the man went."

Zodwa's story showed that when parents suspected that their child was being sexually abused they, sometimes had to be persistent and gain the child's trust in order for the child to disclose sexual abuse. Zodwa's experience indicates the importance of the parents' relationship with the child in order for him/her to open up and disclose child sexual abuse. This correlates with what Bagley and Thurston (1996) point out about parents helping children to disclose child sexual abuse. Bagley and Thurston (1996) highlight that parents can assist their children in disclosing sexual abuse through gentle questioning and listening as illustrated in Zodwa's case.

4.5.4 Females detecting cases of child sexual abuse

The results presented above show that females generally are the ones that detect child sexual abuse. This was confirmed by the groups of parents that participated in the study. They agreed that children generally disclose child sexual abuse to their mothers. This was illustrated by Lwandile's experience of his child denying the occurrence of child sexual abuse when he asked but disclosing the incidence to the mother. The following quotes refer to mothers as the ones that children turn to about sexual abuse.

Lwandile: "When I talked to him he said nothing happened to him but he told his mother that he was raped."

Mothers: *"It is us mothers who are able to communicate with our children about everything. Fathers only take what we tell them about our children."*

Fathers: *"Children talk the first person they tell is their mothers."*

Participants' accounts indicated that children disclose child sexual abuse to their mothers. This may be linked to children having a weaker relationship with male family members as discussed by Magwaza (1997). Females were also the ones that identified and investigated signs that they believed indicated sexual abuse. Their stories showed that they picked up on signs of sexual abuse while caring and spending time with the child victim. It is possible that female family members identify signs of child sexual abuse rather than men as men spend very little time on care activities in accordance with Budlender and Lund (2011). Budlender and Lund (2011) point out that this is not only true when men live away from their children but also when men live with their children.

4.6 Preventing discovery of child sexual abuse

4.6.1 Mothers hiding cases of child sexual abuse

Community leaders and parents shared how mothers sometimes are aware of their child being sexually abused but hide this. Their accounts included mothers telling their children to keep the sexual abuse a secret. This appears to happen when the father is the perpetrator and especially when he is the breadwinner. This is exemplified in the following quotes.

Mothers: *"There is a child that I stay with that was raped by her step father. She woke up the next morning as usual and went to school but came back earlier to tell her mother what her step father did to her. When she told her mother she then replied by saying that she will kill her should she speak about it. She then asked the child to look at her vagina. She did that and she just kept quiet. Even when the father came back she never asked him anything."*

Fathers: *“Also unemployment is the cause because the mother will keep quiet and not report the father because he is a bread winner.”*

Church leaders: *“If it happens that my child tells me that her father is abusing her then I as a mother will tell her that this is the wrong way of talking because I will be protecting my husband since he is the bread winner. Then my husband will continue raping the child.”*

Tribal leaders: *“This is a common thing, sometimes you find that the father is the bread winner at home and because of that they end up raping their children and the mother keeps quiet because if she reports this there will be no food on the table, worse a man raping his own flesh and blood and then you wonder if he is mentally stable or not. Mothers keep quiet to protect their marriage.”*

The results indicate that mothers tend to hide child sexual abuse perpetrated by fathers, especially if they depend on them financially. van Niekerk (2002) confirms that these types of choices are commonly made by family members in South Africa. The choices of the mothers indicate poverty as an underlying factor. This illustrates the relevance of factors on the macro level as this system regulates the environment in which all other systems interact (Rogers, 2010). Thus the trend of mothers hiding cases of child sexual abuse needs to be understood as influenced by forces on macro level in term of cycles of poverty. This confirms the argument made by Loffell (2002) that one significant way of addressing child sexual abuse is to tackle the issue of poverty in South Africa. The results show that mothers consider possible financial loss and possible effects on marriage when deciding whether to report cases of child sexual abuse. Collings (1997) too agrees that the decision-making process is influenced by families considering possible costs such as loss of income. It is also significant that mothers hide cases of child sexual abuse despite child sexual abuse being perceived to have serious consequences as indicated in previous themes outlined in this chapter. This confirms findings by Jewkes et al. (2005) which show that other issues such as family disruption and increased poverty are seen as more important than child sexual abuse among families when they decide how to respond to incidences of child sexual abuse.

4.6.2 Families hiding cases of child sexual abuse

Mpume shared that her family participated in hiding the sexual abuse which resulted in the continuation of the abuse. Mpume's daughter did not get help until she reported the matter to the police. The groups of community leaders confirmed that families sometimes hide cases of child sexual abuse. This is motivated by a perception that the incidence of child sexual abuse may bring shame on the family, if it becomes known to others outside of the family. The following quotes by group members refer to how families in the community hide cases of child sexual abuse.

Mpume: "Her father tried to sleep with her but she refused and he forced himself on her, she then told her grandmother who told her not to ever mention that again she will inform her mother. That is why when it happened for the second time she went straight to the police"

Church leaders: "Parents sometimes hide or deny these cases because they say it's a disgrace, even if they see that this thing is happening they just do not want their family affairs to be of public knowledge."

Church leaders: "The matter ends up not being reported because the family is protecting its name."

Traditional healers: "People are afraid of disgrace."

The traditional healers further reflected on the effects of mothers and families telling their children to keep the sexual abuse a secret. They pointed out that this may lead to the children believing that it is acceptable for adults to sexually abuse them as the following quote show:

Traditional healers: "A child ends up accepting that it is a right thing. She/he will allow any man who wants to rape her/him because she/he was told to keep it a secret."

Community leaders' accounts indicated that child sexual abuse is perceived as shameful and that the occurrence of child sexual abuse therefore reflects poorly on the family. This corresponds with findings by Jewkes et al. (2005) which indicate shame as a factor which may lead families to protect the perpetrator of child sexual abuse. The meso system can be said to represent the root of perceptions of shame in relation to child sexual abuse, as this system includes the norm forming component in the environment where interpersonal relationships take place according to Rogers (2010). Vosler (1999) refers to individual members within the micro system influencing each other. This relates to the point made by the traditional leaders with regards to the effect on children in families where sexual abuse is covered up. These children may not know anything else than what is said and modelled as the norm by the family. This highlights that there is a need for prevention programmes that target children in order for children to receive contradicting messages to those which portray sexual abuse as secret to keep and those which portray sexual abuse as acceptable. This confirms the assessment made by Thakkar-Kolar et al. (2008), in relation to the need for programmes aimed at increasing children's ability to say no and to differentiate between acceptable and non-acceptable touch. It also corresponds with the point made by September (2004) with regards to the need in South Africa for prevention strategies that teach children to disclose abuse. This is however not a sufficient strategies as people in the victim's life most likely will compromise individuals in the community who share the same perceptions in terms of the incidence bringing shame on the victim's family. Thus it is possible that they also cover up the incidence of child sexual abuse in order to protect the victim's family. This indicates that there is a need for prevention programmes to ensure that there are spaces in the community for children to report sexual abuse. This relates to strategies proposed by Marshall and Herman (2000) which involve creating community forums where children can report cases of child sexual abuse.

4.6.3 Non-interference when the perpetrator is a relative

Cases of child sexual abuse where the perpetrator is a family member were only reported by a second party in the community in Mpumes' case. Mpume's story indicated how a tribal leader informed the family and even followed up when the

family did not take action. It also showed that the tribal leader at no point, side lined the family and reported the matter to the police or a social worker as evident in the following quote.

Mpume: "I got a letter from the chief's place because she was going for virginity testing. When I called the person asked me if I knew that my child is not a virgin and I said no. She continued and said that it's not that she is trying to ruin my marriage but the child told her that she told her grandmother and the she said the child must not say anything."

Tribal leaders and church leaders' accounts indicated that they rarely deal with cases of child sexual abuse by a family member and that they found these cases difficult to handle. The traditional healers on the other hand expressed unwillingness to deal with these cases altogether. The following quotes refer to the role of community leaders in terms of reporting child sexual abuse.

Tribal leaders: "I have had cases like that but it has never been that the child was raped by a family member, it is usually children raped by strangers."

Church leaders: "In some cases it does happen that the child's mother will not agree with what the child is saying especially if it was the father who raped the child. Then you as a person who talked to the child ends up being the bad person to the mother. It then requires you to call the police and social workers so that the problem can be solved."

Traditional healers: "We keep quiet because people raise their children in different ways I cannot tell them how to raise their children."

Tribal leaders: "If a family decides not to report a case then that is where it will stay. As Induna you cannot just go and interfere in matters of that family unless they had reported the matter to you, the family is supposed to report the matter to Induna."

Both family members' and community leaders' accounts indicate that child sexual abuse perpetrated by a relative as defined by Burkhardt and Rotatori (1995) is the

type of abuse that is most likely to be hidden and go unreported in the community. This is closely linked to the arguments of Larsen et al. (1998) which identifies child sexual abuse perpetrated by a relative as hidden and therefore not adequately represented in studies aimed at determining prevalence. Participants' accounts previously indicated that this is linked to the family and/or the perpetrators' spouses being inclined to hide the incidence. The fact that community leaders found it difficult to deal with cases of child sexual abuse seems to promote keeping this type of sexual abuse hidden. This corresponds with findings by Jewkes et al. (2005) which highlight that people may provide little assistance in cases of child rape as it may be seen as a private issue. The results also indicated that community leaders tend to allow the family to respond to child sexual abuse in whatever way they choose. The community leaders did not appear to view it as their responsibility to report cases of child sexual abuse to the police or a social worker, despite this being a legal obligation as stipulated in Criminal Law (Sexual Offences & Related Matters) Amendment Act (2007). The community leaders' accounts also showed that they are faced with challenges when dealing with cases of child sexual abuse. This indicates a need to support and assist community leaders in responding to child sexual abuse.

4.7 Responses to child sexual abuse

The family members' accounts included how they responded to child sexual abuse. Community leaders and parents in the community confirmed that other families in the community also responded in similar ways.

4.7.1 Families reporting cases of child sexual abuse

Many family members initially took the child to a health facility regarding the case of child sexual abuse. When the child was taken to a health facility prior to the case being reported to the police this was done to confirm that the child had been sexually abused. The following quotes exemplify these types of responses to child sexual abuse.

Agnes: "I became suspicious but I wasn't sure what it was so I decided to go to the clinic and the nurses told me the child had been abused."

Anele: *"I took my child to the clinic. They looked at her and confirmed that she had been raped."*

Mothers: *"When you see that something is really wrong with your children you take them to the clinic for check up. That is where you will get confirmation of whether your child is being sexually abused or not. The nurses will then advise you to call the police and the social workers."*

Other family members in the study initially reported child sexual abuse to the police. Family members, community leaders and parents all agreed that the main reasons for reporting cases of child sexual abuse was based on belief in the legal system and wanting to catch the perpetrator. This is illustrated in the following quotes.

Zodwa: *"My neighbour and I took the children to the police and we reported the case and there was a social worker who asked each child what really happened and the children were taken to the hospital for a check up."*

Thandiwe: *"The law says we shouldn't take these things in to our own hands. That stopped me from killing him. I thought the police would help me."*

Tribal leaders: *"If a child is sexually abused we go straight to the police. The one who has committed the sexual abuse is taken away and put in prison. This is because we as a community do not want something like this in our community."*

Family members' and tribal leaders' reasons for reporting child sexual abuse corresponds with Collings' (1997) argument, that individuals consider benefits in relation to the safety of the child when deciding whether to report child sexual abuse. The family members in the study reported cases of child sexual abuse in order to ensure the safety of the victim. This relied on a belief that the legal system would keep the child safe. They also expressed that their children would not be safe until the perpetrators are removed from the community.

4.7.2 The challenge of perpetrators remaining in the community

Participants shared about challenges that they face when the alleged perpetrator still is around in the community. The following quotes exemplify how they experience that they cannot ensure the safety of the victim.

Anele: "He is out now that means that the child will live a life of not being safe. Everywhere she goes she looks out for Sipho and run if she sees him. What if Sipho sees her first, because even if Sipho kills her he will go to jail and come back after four months. And he can finish us all because we do not have money to pay for a lawyer."

Phumlani: "My child is not the first one that this guy raped. She is the third one or the forth one. I am not sure. I wonder if he is not arrested because he is mentally ill. So many children are at risk and mine also."

Agnes: I'm not okay about this, because this might happen again, because it happened two times in one year so I am afraid

Fathers: "It is a problem when a person will get arrested and get released sooner. By that time the child has not come to terms with what happened and is still hurting inside. When they see that person it's like they see an animal."

The participants described how perpetrators remain in the community. It is also significant that the alleged perpetrator remained in the community in five out of six of the cases represented in the study. This confirms what Marshall and Herman (2000) and Loffell (2002) point out in regards to the majority of perpetrators escaping the criminal justice system. Family members also shared how they perceived their own child and other children to be at risk due to this. It further appeared as if families experienced fear and hopelessness in relation to situations where the perpetrator was present in the community. Their accounts can be said to illustrate detrimental impact on families in terms of perpetrators of child sexual abuse walking free.

4.7.3 Dealing with the perpetrator of child sexual abuse

The previous theme showed that many family members, who reported cases of child sexual abuse, expressed a concern for the safety of their children in relation to the perpetrator being present in the community. Families of victims of child sexual abuse further shared that if they were faced with another incidence they would deal with the matter themselves. Their accounts indicated that these thoughts were based on their previous experience of not being assisted when reporting the case of child sexual abuse. Their disappointments further appeared to be linked to perpetrators not being identified or prosecuted. Accounts by parents and tribal leaders confirmed that families sometimes experienced that the only solution to keep their children safe was to punish the perpetrator themselves as indicated in the following quotes.

Thandiwe: *“If this happens again we will have to take action because the police did not do anything to help.”*

Mothers: *“These people should be killed because they get arrested and the next thing they are out and they continue to abuse. This will cause pain to children when they see the very same person who abused them out in the community.”*

Fathers: *“They say we should not take the law into our hands but you might go and report a case only to find out that that person is not interested and they end up arresting the criminal for a short period of time.”*

Tribal leaders: *“All in all these people need to be beaten up until they bleed so they can get rid of the bad blood that causes their bad behaviours, they shouldn't be arrested.”*

These accounts by participants can be understood from an ecosystem perspective. Since families experienced failure in relation to the part of the exo system that encompasses the legal system and the social service system (Longres, 1995). Families then react to this by attempting to deal with the matter within the meso system with the help of neighbours or within the exo system with the help of community leaders. The result indicates that there seems to be agreement within all

these systems of the need for the community to deal with and punish perpetrators. Families' experiences need to be understood in relation Collings' (1997) view of individuals considering the benefits in relation to the child's safety when deciding whether to report child sexual abuse. Hence it is questionable whether families will be motivated to report cases of child sexual abuse to the police if they perceive this as not ensuring the safety of children. The researcher notes that the previous theme indicated that families chose to report cases to the police due to belief in the legal system and the social service system. It is therefore possible to conclude that families may choose not to report cases to the police due to mistrust in these systems. This corresponds with what van Niekerk (2002) recall in terms of the opinion of a medical doctor in a rural area. The medical doctor perceived it to be pointless to report cases of child sexual abuse as the perpetrator will return to the community within days. (van Niekerk, 2002). Keeton (2004) and Richter and Dawes (2008) also point out that the majority of cases of child sexual abuse never are reported to the police or other social service providers. The researcher concludes that families' unsatisfactory experiences of reporting case of child sexual abuse may well be one reason for the trend of cases not being reported. This corresponds with literature that highlights that families' responses to child sexual abuse are influenced by lack of interventions and services in the community (Loffell, 2002, 2004; Porter, 1984; van Niekerk, 2002).

4.7.4 Responses by victims of domestic violence

Two female family members shared about their experiences of responding to child sexual abuse in the context of domestic violence. Both women had experienced abuse and violence directed at them by the perpetrator of child sexual abuse. Their responses did however vary. Mpume did not report the case of child sexual abuse and remained passive allowing the sexual abuse to continue. The group of mothers confirmed that Mpume's response is common among women who are victims of domestic violence. Anele's response did however differ from Mpume's as she took action in terms of reporting the case of child sexual abuse and leaving her abusive partner. Anele's story also differs from Mpume's as she had support from other family members in relation to dealing with the incidence of child sexual abuse. The

quotes by female participants describe victims' of domestic violence responses to child sexual abuse.

Mpume: "So I stayed until he raped my child for the second time. I even stayed after that because I still did not know what to do."

Mpume: "I ended up not knowing what to do because whenever I threatened to leave him he came with police to talk to me but when it was him abusing me you never saw them."

Mpume: "Whenever her father was abusing me we would call the police from Port Edward but they never did anything they said it is a family matter."

Mothers: "It might happen that mothers say that the child must keep quiet because maybe she also is being raped by the boyfriend. She is scared because she is also a victim."

Anele: "He showed her a gun and said he will shoot her if she tells anyone about what happened. I believed my child because I knew he had a gun. He used to point it at me when we had a fight."

Anele: "I called my mother in law to also look at the child and she also insisted that she had been raped. Even my husband's sister agreed that the child had been raped and she could not hold herself from crying."

Anele: "I just packed everything that was mine and went back home to where I am born. I made a decision to end my marriage because I realised that my child was not safe anymore."

The victims' accounts need to be understood in relation Richter et al. (2004) pointing out that abuse is closely linked to power. Hence women who are victims of domestic violence will be less likely than other women to find the power to confront or act when faced with child sexual abuse. Mpume's experience of not being assisted by the police in relation to her husband abusing her will most likely have contributed to

further feelings of powerlessness. It is significant to note how Anele managed to confront her husband and to act to protect her child although she was a victim of domestic violence. Anele's story did however include support from other females. The researcher concludes that these women's experiences highlight the devastating effects of the legal system failing victims of domestic violence and the difference that social support can have for victims in terms of responding to child sexual abuse.

4.7.5 Blaming the victim of child sexual abuse

Some family members responded to child sexual abuse through words or actions that indicate that they blamed the child for the incidence as exemplified below.

Sylvia: *"She told me that she was raped. I hit her and asked her why she was hiding it from me."*

Ntombifuthi: *"I hit the child because it is our culture when a child does something wrong. But I know that she did not do something wrong but I still did it."*

Zodwa: *"My husband does not talk much but he did not support me. He would just say that the child asked for this because he comes home late."*

The family members' reasons for blaming the child varied but one reason which was confirmed by family members, community leaders and the group of mothers was that blame of the child referred to choices made by the child. The following quotes illustrate families' reasoning in relation to the issue of blame.

Tribal leaders: *"It happens that abused children are blamed because they have exposed themselves to the situation."*

Tribal leaders: *"When children come home after dark and say that they have been raped by a stranger. In those cases it is the child who exposed himself/herself to the situation."*

Traditional healers: *“Children do not wear appropriate clothes. They are a temptation to men.”*

Mothers: *“First of all I do not want to lie if a child comes with that case it is hard because children of today are very naughty. If I were to go to my friends mom and tell her that I have been raped she would first see what kind of a child I am.”*

It is not uncommon for family members to blame the child for incidences of child sexual abuse in South Africa (Jewkes et al., 2005). Thus blame as illustrated above may not be uncommon. The family members' responses also correlate with what Collings (1997 in Stevens et al., 2004) defines as blame diffusion. Blame diffusion links the reason for the occurrence of child sexual abuse to factors other than ones that relate to the perpetrator. This sometimes includes blaming the child's personal attributes or the child's behaviour (Collings, 1997 in Stevens et al., 2004). The participants explained that the child is to blame due to his/her behaviour in terms of for example being out late or due to his/her personal attributes in terms of the way he/she dresses.

4.7.6 Seeking compensation from the perpetrator of child sexual abuse

Some of the participants shared that families seek compensation from perpetrators of child sexual abuse. Fathers' accounts indicated that this practice sometimes substitutes reporting cases to the police. Participants did however also express views that compensating the perpetrator is insufficient as it does not ensure that the children are protected from further sexual abuse, as illustrated below.

Fathers: *“When a person that has raped my child has money I will ask for them to pay me so that I will not report them to the police.”*

Traditional healers: *“There has to be payments made, raping is like death. The person that has raped needs to buy a goat to cleanse the family and the girls from the family and remove the curse.”*

Traditional healers: *“It is not right because people will not stop raping.”*

Mothers: *"It is not right because people will continue raping children because they know that they will pay money and that will be the end of the story."*

The response of compensating the perpetrator as illustrated above is one out of three common responses to child sexual abuse in South Africa and Namibia according to Jewkes et al. (2005). The accounts made by fathers also correspond with the point by van Niekerk (2002) regarding families dealing with cases in this manner rather than reporting incidences to the police. The reasons that the participants gave for not agreeing with the practice of families seeking compensation in cases of child sexual abuse corresponds with concerns by Magwaza (1997). These concerns include this type of practice resulting in perpetrators never being prosecuted and perpetrators continuing to abuse children (Magwaza, 1997).

4.7.7 The role of men in responding to child sexual abuse

None of the male family members were part of reporting cases of child sexual abuse to the police. The male stories differed as Phumlani supported the mother in reporting the case while Lwandile shared how his wife reported the incidence without consulting him. The views expressed by fathers indicated that males normally play no part in responding to child sexual abuse. The limited role of men in responding to child sexual abuse is exemplified in the following quotes.

Mother: *"The child's father said the person who did this should go to jail and I told him I have opened a case already."*

Lwandile: *"I was very disturbed when I heard that this matter had been taken to the police before we could even get together and talk about it."*

Fathers: *"We are not used to something like child sexual abuse because mothers are very secretive."*

The fathers' accounts of men having limited experience or awareness of child sexual abuse cases corresponds with findings by Budlender and Lund (2011) in terms of

men being absent in the lives of children. Lwandile's story in a sense contradicts what Magwaza (1997, p. 162) refers to as *"the powerlessness of mothers and mother figures"*. The researcher notes that Lwandile lived with his family and was identified as the head of the house by the family. Magwaza (1997) points out that African culture is highly patriarchal which means that females have to obey male figures without questioning their decisions. It is therefore significant that his wife did not consult Lwandile in relation to reporting the case of child sexual abuse. One explanation for Lwandile not to be consulted may be that his wife did not perceive dealing with child sexual abuse to be part of his role in the family. The researcher notes that accounts by men of not being aware of the issue of child sexual abuse may be linked to perceptions of their role as men. The role of men in relation to child sexual abuse will be discussed later in this chapter.

4.8 Challenges when responding to child sexual abuse

Family members described many challenges that they encountered when responding to child sexual abuse. These challenges mainly related to the child protection system and negative experiences in their neighbourhood. Another challenge included threats by family members as illustrated through Mpume's story and accounts by groups of parents.

4.8.1 The child protection system

The experiences of family members who reported cases of child sexual abuse were full of disappointments. Family members were disappointed in the outcome of the cases, lack of follow up and lack of information about the case from the police and social workers. The family members' experiences reflected confusion, hopelessness and disempowerment as illustrated below.

Mbali: *"I called the police station to find out what was happening about the case but I never got an answer. Every time I called they would say that the person I want is not there. I do not like how this ended because my child was hurting and she kept complaining. I even went to the social workers to ask what was happening with the case but she just said that she does not know but the police should know."*

Zodwa: *“At first it looked like they were willing to help but along the line they stopped and told us we making this up. We should just go home and take care of our children. I did not know if that is how the law is. I was very confused.”*

Zodwa: *“The social worker said she will take the children for counselling but even today we have not heard anything from her.”*

Phumlani: *“What breaks my heart the most is that we were not informed and did not get much of an explanation when the guy was released from prison. The child’s mother saw him and phoned me. I then phoned the person in charge of the case who said that he does not know much but what he thinks is that the guy is out because he is mentally ill.”*

Phumlani: *“I wish they would have kept this guy in jail and called us to testify to what we saw, because what I saw at the clinic was a shock and unacceptable. They showed me the damage on her vagina and I remember the way the child was bleeding.*

Fathers: *“Police like spending time on cases that are minor but cases that are serious are never investigated. You find that a person will be arrested and then released for rape. When they come back they rape again.”*

Church leaders: *“When you report a case to the police with the hope that the police will deal with it immediately and then they do not, then your life is in danger you end up not being able to sleep or walk freely in the community. Sometimes they will arrest him but soon release him when he comes back he knows exactly who to go to because the police inform them of who reported him to them.”*

The results indicate, what according to the ecosystems theory can be labelled as poor person-in-environment fit as defined by Kirst-Ashman (2008). Person-in-environment fit measures to what extent the environment corresponds with the individual’s needs, rights and wishes (Kirst-Ashman, 2008). The participants’

experiences indicate that the environment in which families report child sexual abuse did not meet their needs of information and of follow up. It can also be said that their wishes of the perpetrator being prosecuted do not correspond with the actual outcome of the cases and their need to protect their children. These experiences reflect arguments by Loffell (2004) and van Niekerk (2002) of how insufficiencies in child protection services in South Africa lead to families being unable to adequately protect their children. The results indicate experiences of perpetrators walking free which as discussed previously is common in South Africa (Marshall & Herman, 2000). The researcher notes that the experiences illustrated in the study show the same outcomes as those highlighted by Madu (2003) with regards to families not reporting cases of child sexual abuse. Since Madu (2003) describe how perpetrators remain free in the community and psychological, social and psychiatric effects of the abuse on the victim remain unaddressed. The researcher concludes that families seem to experience similar outcomes whether they report the incidence or not.

4.8.2 Corruption

Anele and the traditional healers shared that another challenge for families in responding to child sexual abuse is corrupt law enforcement officers, as illustrated in the following quotes.

Anele: "I know my husband. I am sure there was money given to that investigator."

Anele: "Even when we were staying together he used to tell me that he can kill me and get away with it because people in his world live for money which is something he has. The case just ended like that."

Traditional healers: "It happens that sometimes you report a case then the criminal just pays the police to get rid of the docket. Then the person is released and now the family and the baby will not be safe the child might end up leaving home and go stay on the streets in Durban."

The tribal leaders spoke about other peoples' experiences in relation to the occurrence of corruption which indicates that these stories were being shared in the

community. Peoples' experiences of corruption or what they hear about other peoples' experiences have the potential to feed into mistrust in the child protection system. Mistrust in the child protection system will spread as these stories are shared, since the way humans understand the world is constructed through social interaction according to Burr (2003). This correlates with earlier themes in this chapter which indicated that families sometimes take the matter of dealing with child sexual abuse into their own hands due to mistrust in the child protection system.

4.8.3 Stigma in the community

Many of the family members' stories included being stigmatised in the community. Community members appeared to either deny the occurrence of child sexual abuse or side with the perpetrator. Agne's account also included experiencing how community members' failed to assist her due to fear. The following quotes refer to families' experiences of stigma in relation to child sexual abuse.

Mbali: *"People did not believe us and said with just hate the child's father. That he would not do such a thing. We were bad people in the community."*

Lindiwe: *"They said that the children were just playing hide and seek. No one raped her."*

Agnes: *"She was also sad after hearing about this but she was too scared to testify. So it was in my hands to take this matter to the police."*

Mothers: *"It is because people are scared of their neighbour's that is why most people do not face their problems because they are scared of neighbours talking too much."*

Family members' experiences within the meso system and the exo system confirm the opinions of Jewkes et al. (2005) and van Niekerk (2002) that shame, fear and taboos exist in the community in relation to child sexual abuse. Family members' experiences of the community denying the occurrence of child sexual abuse further relates to the phenomenon of normalisation of child sexual abuse (Townsend &

Dawes, 2004). It also relates to rape of children being socially accepted by the community (Guma & Henda, 2004). Hence if the norm is that rape of children is accepted within the community, it explains why the community view families who report cases as “bad people”. They would be labelled as such because they go against the norm in the community by reporting incidences of child sexual abuse. Stigma and fear that exists on meso level also result in family members receiving no support from the community when pursuing cases of child sexual abuse.

4.8.4 Threats towards mothers

Mpume experienced threats from her husband’s family to try to make her drop the case of child sexual abuse against their son. The focus group participants confirmed that mothers who try to report child sexual abuse sometimes experience threats from the perpetrators’ family or from the perpetrator as exemplified in the quotes below.

Mpume: *“I was attacked by his uncles asking me to withdraw the case.”*

Mpume: *“When they see me in town they shout and call me names saying that I am an evil woman. That I got their son arrested.”*

Fathers: *“Sometime the mother will agree to pressing charges but the family of the perpetrator will now threaten the child’s mother and hate her.”*

Church leaders: *“It happens that sometimes the perpetrator is a known criminal and the mother is scared of him. That is something that happens and the community end up picking up that there is a problem and the mother’s life is now at stake.”*

The participants’ experiences confirm the occurrence of pressure, intimidation and threats made towards families in South Africa in order for cases of child sexual abuse not to be reported as highlighted by van Niekerk (2002). The researcher notes that mothers who reported child sexual abuse not only had to deal with stigma and little support within the child protection system but also actual threats to silence them. Women facing these challenges do, as previous themes indicated, carry the sole responsibility of protecting children from sexual abuse. This can be linked to

interdependence as defined by Kirst-Ashman (2008), which suggests that all individuals are dependent on input, support and services from others in accordance with ecosystems theory. Thus the challenges that women face when responding to child sexual abuse involve pressure not to report cases, lack of support in pursuing cases and lack of services when reporting cases.

4.8.5 The psycho-social effects

Family members described how they witnessed psycho-social effects of sexual abuse on their children as exemplified below.

Thandiwe: *"My child is scared to go on her own now I have to take her to school and fetch her."*

Mpume: *"She is recovering but when it is time for the case the pain comes back and she is still struggling to understand men."*

Rose: *"Sometimes she just gets blackouts when I am talking to her and I just assume she is thinking about what happened. "*

Family members shared about how they themselves still were traumatised and how they struggled to know how to assist victims of child sexual abuse. Phumlani also shared how it is particularly difficult for him as a male to know how to best relate to his daughter. The following quotes refer to psycho-social impact of child sexual abuse on families.

Mbali: *"It is still hard for me because every time I talk about this I just cry. So it will be hard for me to talk to the child about this."*

Thandiwe: *"It is still painful because it feels like I failed."*

Phumlani: *"I can see that my child is behaving differently compared to before this thing happened. The child seemed happier before, she does not look happy now. I*

am trying everything to do something about that. I take her to town and buy her new stuff, like toys or clothes. But I can see that it still does not take this thing away.”

Phumlani: *“Because I love my children I spend time with them during the weekends. I usually call them to visit me and they even sleep over at my place. But now if I do that I am scared and not comfortable, because I do not know what the child thinks since I am a guy. Since I am a guy and she was raped by a guy. I feel like she does not trust me. I wish she can get help.”*

Family member’s accounts of the effects of sexual abuse in terms of children’s mental health and behaviours correlate with some of the effects presented by Killian and Brakarsh (2004) and Jones and Ramchandani (1999). These accounts indicated that psycho-social effects on children and families also need to be understood in the context of lack of follow up services and counselling. Thus family members’ experiences highlight the need for such services both for children and families. Mbali’s account indicated the need for family members to deal with their own trauma. Other family members’ accounts indicated the need for assistance and guidance in how to best assist victims of child sexual abuse. It is also significant to note that males indicated a particular struggle in terms of how to support female victims.

4.8.6 Victims being stigmatised

The following quotes include accounts by both family members and tribal leaders with regards to victims of child sexual abuse being stigmatised in the community.

Zodwa: *“His older brother did not even want to talk about this because the guy who did this is his age so his friends talked about it and he did not like it.”*

Lwandile: *“I still see my child as a male no matter what people say. They may say that he was treated as a female but I strongly believe he is a male.”*

Tribal leaders: *“You find that children have lost confidence in themselves because everyone in the community knows that they have been abused either by one person*

or more. Even if they try to associate themselves with other children they end up being called names and that becomes painful for those children.”

The participants' accounts indicated that children who have been sexually abused are stigmatised in the community. This in turn highlights the need for psycho-social support for victims and especially for male victims. Lwandile's story points to a heightened stigma attached to male victims. This indicates that psycho-social services need to address such stigma due to the risk of long term effects of sexual abuse among male victims, as presented by Burkhardt and Rotatori (1995). Such effects involve the possibility of male victims identifying with the perpetrator and later victimising others (Burkhardt & Rotatori, 1995). Earlier accounts in terms of lack of psycho-social services in conjunction with the risk of males victimising others may well explain the increase of teenage perpetrators or young adult perpetrators as indicated by van Niekerk (2004) and Collings (2008).

4.9 Risk factors in relation to child sexual abuse

4.9.1 Stepfathers

Participants shared that it is not uncommon for stepfathers to sexually abuse their partner's biological children. They further indicated that stepfathers may see this as their right as illustrated in the following quotes.

Mpume: *“Her father said you cannot grow maize and water and then allow the neighbours to come and eat it before you. I asked him what he meant by that: do you mean that since my daughter grew up in front of you it means that she is just a doll that you can do bad things to?”*

Mothers: *“Stepfathers because they rape children as they know they are not theirs biologically.”*

Tribal leaders: *“Young girls are getting children when they are still young and out of wedlock. They break up with the father of the baby and they get married to another*

man. As a result these men end up raping the children because biologically they are not theirs so they take advantage.”

Tribal leaders: “Knowing that these are not his children gives him the power to abuse them. That is why sometimes mothers are advised not to leave their children with their fathers alone.”

The participants’ accounts reflected perceptions among stepfathers of feeling entitled to sexually abuse children. This is closely linked to how Rithcher et al. (2004) refer to men in patriarchal societies viewing abuse of women and children as their right. The participants in the study also shared that sexual abuse of children by stepfathers is linked to perceptions among stepfathers of entitlement and power attributed to children not being theirs biologically. It is therefore evident that prevention programmes need to address such perceptions among stepfathers.

4.9.2 Substance abuse

The participants explained that adults who are under the influence of drugs or alcohol do not care appropriately for their children and that adults sexually abuse children while under the influence of drugs or alcohol. The following quotes show how participants linked drug and alcohol abuse to child sexual abuse.

Traditional healers: “Mostly men because they use drugs that cause them to be sexually active.”

Traditional healers: “Parents drink a lot they do not care for their children.”

Fathers: “Drugs and drinking alcohol causes people not to think straight.”

Fathers: “On the way they will meet with a drunk women and she will rape the boy because she is under the influence.”

Mothers: “Brothers who are using drugs when they are high they do things they never thought they will do.”

The participants' accounts indicated that substance abuse is a significant risk factor in relation to child sexual abuse. Thus children, in families where there is substance abuse, can be seen as vulnerable to child sexual abuse. This correlates with the view of Madu (2003) that prevention needs to focus on supporting vulnerable children and families to reduce risk factors related to abuse.

4.9.3 Women carrying the sole responsibility for children

Participants shared that mothers or women generally care for children, as fathers often do not live with their children. The following quotes illustrate the roles of females and males in caring for children.

Phumlani: *"I do not stay with the child so I can't make sure where my children are all the time and where they are playing and who they are playing with. I wish the mother can get help since she is responsible for the child but I am not sure what help."*

Father: *"I do not even know where my children are. They stay with their mother. I do not know what she does with them."*

Fathers: *"I think people who spend most time with the children are mothers."*

Traditional healers: *"People who deal with issues are women."*

Mothers: *"Especially mothers because they are the ones who care more about the wellbeing of children."*

The participants' accounts indicated that fathers do not play much of a role in caring for their children and consequently not much of a role in protecting children from sexual abuse. This confirms the point made by Hunter (2004) with regards to how the social role of fathers has been diminished. It is significant to note that the social role of fathers historically included protecting their children in the Zulu culture (Hunter, 2004). The results in the study correspond with findings by Jewkes et al. (2005) who found that respondents in their study did not refer to fathers as protectors

of their children against sexual abuse. Magwaza (1997) also refers to gender roles and particularly the absence of men in family life as risk factors linked to child sexual abuse. Plummer and Njuguna (2009) too found that participants in their study pointed to how gender roles that differentiate males and females place children at increased risk of sexual abuse. The fathers' account of not living with their children further correlates with the point made by Hunter (2004) with regards to males being prevented to fulfil the social role of fatherhood. They are prevented to fulfil this role due to not affording to get married and due to other social factors linked to poverty (Hunter, 2004). This can also be understood from an ecosystem perspective. Since Longres (1995) points out that each member's role within a system is closely linked to social norms, as these determine the actions expected from each member. The study revealed the existence of norms linked to female and male roles. This was evident as the participants' accounts and attitudes pointed to an expectation of mothers and not fathers to care for and protect children.

4.9.4 The absence of adults

Some of the participants shared about how children are not protected from child sexual abuse due to the absence of adults or lack of adult supervision. This is exemplified in the following quotes:

Lwandile: *"Every day I wake up at four for work and I come back late, there is nothing I say or we do to protect the children, because even their mother comes back late."*

Tribal leaders: *"Children play alone with no adult supervision."*

Church leaders: *"Some children do not have families because they live alone with no adult person as a guardian. It is sometimes because both parents died and the children do not want relatives coming in to live with them."*

Lwandile's story confirms the view of Townsend and Dawes (2004) in terms of parents being unable to monitor and supervise their children as they are forced to seek employment away from home. It is significant that some participants showed

awareness with regards to lack of adult supervision rendering children vulnerable to child sexual abuse. The community leaders pointed to how children are vulnerable when parents are deceased. This correlates with the point by Jewkes (2004) of children being orphaned due to the HIV/AIDS epidemic and that this is linked to increased vulnerability among children in relation to child sexual abuse.

4.9.5 Parents being emotionally unavailable

Some of the participants reflected how some parents fail to protect their children from sexual abuse, as they do not pay attention to their children or child sexual abuse. The following quotes refer to parents being emotionally unavailable for their children.

Agnes: *“Most parents do not have time for their children, some are working some are busy doing drugs, so they do not get time to talk.”*

Mothers: *“Parents do not pay attention to their children when they talk even when they say something very important they will not be noticed because parents are not used to speaking to them.”*

Fathers: *“What I can say is that parents do not pay attention to child sexual abuse. You find that both mothers will sit down and talk about what their kids did but they never care about what should be done about the children or how they feel.”*

The participants' accounts confirmed what Marshall and Herman (2000) describe of lack of affection and communication with children providing opportunities for child sexual abuse. The need to strengthen families is again highlighted (Loffell, 2004) but this time in relation to strengthening communication and bonding between children and adults. Marshall and Herman (2000) also link this emotional unavailability among adults to how poverty puts strain on the family, who become preoccupied with basic survival. This indicates the need for interventions on macro level in accordance with Mbambo and Phiyega (2004). Interventions on macro level need to include economic development (Mbambo & Phiyega, 2004).

4.9.6 Guidance and discipline of children

Some of the participants shared about how parents struggled to guide their children. These statements were made on the topic of how children may be to blame for child sexual abuse as they put themselves at risk as. Families' challenges in terms of guiding and disciplining their children are indicated in the following quotes.

Mothers: *"It is because parents are scared of sitting down with their children and talking to them. Even when they see that their children are doing wrong things they find it hard to give advice."*

Church leaders: *"The problem is with us parents we do not know how to teach our children."*

The community leaders share about struggles to control what their children do and to discipline them in relation to the same topic as mentioned above.

Traditional healers: *"They start at the age of 10 to do what they want."*

Tribal leaders: *"Children of today just do whatever they want because they know that once you punish them they will get you arrested for abusing them and violating their rights."*

Church leaders: *"A law was passed that says that children should not be beaten even if they are at fault. There are many children that are up and down on the streets."*

Traditional healers: *"If only the government can allow us to beat our children as it was done with us when we grew up, because you can beat up your children and the next morning they will not go to school they will go to the police station."*

Plummer and Njuguna (2009) present families' guidance of children as a way to protect children from sexual abuse. This means that if families struggle to guide their children it affects their ability to protect their children from sexual abuse. Thus the

challenges that participants expressed in terms of guiding and disciplining their children may result in added risk of child sexual abuse. Bagley and Thurston (1996) offer an explanation to this when describing how children rely on adults to protect them and guide. In particular when it comes to sexual abuse as this is a difficult issue for children to grasp due to their developmental ability. The participants' accounts also need to be understood from an ecosystem perspective in relation to the systems adapting and adjusting to other systems as explained by Kirst-Ashman (2008). The participants' experiences indicate that they have not yet adapted and adjusted to disciplining children in relation to legal frameworks. Thus prevention programmes with parents and carers need to assist and facilitate ways for them to experience that they can guide and discipline their children sufficiently.

4.9.7 Children watching adults have sex

Focus groups participants identified that children watch adults having sex and that this leads to children sexually abusing other children, as illustrated in the following quotes.

Tribal leaders: *"Children stay up until late watching adult movies where they see all these wrong things, and because they are so young their minds are still fresh they memorise these things and then put them into practise."*

Church leaders: *"Especially at night we go to sleep and leave our children alone to watch TV. Children should always be supervised when watching TV and we should tell them about things that come up on TV that they are meant to be done by married people so they will grow up with that."*

Church leaders: *"You find that a man is living with his wife and children in the same room they do as they wish in front of children. These children grow up knowing how to have sex."*

Mothers: *"Children see these things from their parents."*

Families' accounts of children watching inappropriate programmes on television link to previous themes which indicated that families struggle to guide and supervise their children. Children watching adults having sex can be seen as an issue which is linked to crowded living arrangements and poverty. The research in the literature review does however, not include reference to such a link.

4.9.8 Families non-communication about child sexual abuse

Parents and traditional healers shared that families sometimes struggled to communicate with each other at home. There is fear within families of talking about sex and sexual abuse, as indicated in the following quotes.

Mothers: "It is being scared, nothing else, because I will be scared to think about how I could even bring up the subject at home."

Fathers: "Our parents were never open with us to talk about sex and so we grew up with that, it seems like a disgrace to talk about sex."

Traditional healers: "Some parents are scared of talking to their children."

Mothers: "There is fear of coming out and talking about it."

The results indicated that parents do not know how to talk to their children in general and especially about child sexual abuse. This confirms findings by Babatsikos (2010) which revealed that parents are willing to speak to their children about sexual abuse but experience that they are incapable to do so. Participants also described fear of speaking about child sexual abuse which supports the view of Plummer and Njuguna (2009) of an existing culture of prevailing silence. Plummer and Njuguna (2009) refer to the code of silence as a risk factor in relation to child sexual abuse.

4.10 Attempts to protect children from sexual abuse

The results contained very few accounts of how families protect their children from sexual abuse. Some family members became aware of the need to protect their

children after the incidence of child sexual abuse. The focus group participants were asked how families protected their children from sexual abuse in KwaNzimakwe but their answers mainly included suggestions on how to strengthen the protection of children from sexual abuse. The lack of accounts about how families protect their children from sexual abuse may indicate that families do not make deliberate choices in this regard unless they have experienced that their child has been sexually abused.

4.10.1 Adult supervision

Two of the family members' accounts included how they attempted to increase supervision of their children, as the following quotes show.

Thandiwe: *"Before she was abused I would send her anywhere but now I do not even send her to the shops."*

Thandiwe: *"She is safe because I go with her to school and fetch her after school."*

Agnes: *"I always make sure I know where she is, I keep an eye on her all the time even ask her to play here at home with her friends."*

Agnes: *"I will just say, the people who have not been through this they need to be more careful when it comes to their children and make sure they are protected all the time."*

Lindiwe: *"Even when the child is young it is important to make sure he/she is safe all the time. You must never think that nothing will happen to her because she is young."*

It is significant to note that family members who attempted to increase supervision of their children from sexual abuse had the opportunity to do so as they were working from home or not working. This correlates with previous themes which indicated that family members who are employed struggle to supervise their children. Thandiwe's account indicated that she did not see the same need to supervise her child prior to

the incidence of child sexual abuse. Similarly Swart-Kruger (2004) describes that the majority of parents expressed that they left their children unsupervised as they believed that the children were able to look after themselves and not because they felt forced to do so. Parents' perception of children being able to look after themselves also relates to their awareness of the risk of child sexual abuse. Agne's and Lindiwe's accounts point to how families who have not experienced cases of child sexual abuse are less aware of the potential risk of child sexual abuse.

4.10.2 Families sending children to a Crèche

Ntombifuthi began to send her children to crèche following the incidence of child sexual abuse. Parents confirm the view that this is a way of attempting to protect children from sexual abuse, as exemplified below.

Ntombifuthi: *"I saw that my children are being abused because they stay at home so I decided to take them back to crèche."*

Mothers: *"We can prevent this by making sure that children have childminders or they go to crèche where they will be safe."*

Fathers: *"The truth is as we are working, we can't always be with our children to protect them. In most cases we rely on crèche ladies to protect our children."*

Ntombifuthi's and the other parent's perceptions of ways to protect children from sexual abuse refer to the need for adult supervision. Ntombifuthi was employed which explains that she decided to send her children to crèche. The fact that parents send their children to crèche in order to keep them safe indicates the need to work with teachers with regards to child protection as highlighted by Marshall and Herman (2000).

4.10.3 Communication with child about child sexual abuse

Other family members described how following the case of sexual abuse they attempted to communicate with the child about sexual abuse. They spoke to their

children about the importance of reporting sexual abuse, as is evident in the following quotes.

Agnes: "I believed it was my duty to sit the child down and tell her she must not let anyone touch her private parts, if someone tries to touch her she must tell me."

Rose: "I asked her if she remembers what happened and that she must never let anyone touch her."

Agne's and Rose's story involved initiating communication about child sexual abuse, after the incidence of child sexual abuse. There were no accounts of family members communicating with children about child sexual abuse in order to protect them from sexual abuse prior to the incidence of child sexual abuse. This correlates with how previous themes indicated that family members do not communicate about child sexual abuse and that they are fearful to do so.

4.10.4 Not leaving children in the care of males

Two family members with past experiences of child sexual abuse referred to how they protected their children by avoiding leaving them with males. Tribal leaders confirmed that these types of perceptions and practices exist in the community. They shared that these attempts to protect children prevent males from interacting with children. The inclination among females to not leave their children with men and the effects this has on men were evident in the following quotes.

Mbali: "You should never leave your child with a man."

Rose: "I am only staying with my children and they are girls so she is protected."

Tribal leaders: "Fathers and uncles come across as people that children should be afraid/wary of. They are taught in such a way."

Tribal leaders: "You find that as a man you can't play with the child like you grew up seeing it be done."

Tribal leaders: *“This bothers us a lot. We do not know how these things can be fixed because it is not all fathers/men who have this problem. “*

The accounts which indicate that females do not leave children with males need to be understood in relation to the previously identified perception of males as potential perpetrators of child sexual abuse. Mbali's and Rose's feelings on the matter were most likely even stronger as their children both allegedly were sexually abused by male perpetrators. The results do however indicate that experiences of child sexual abuse by male perpetrators appear to prevent the general population of males from engaging with their children in healthy ways. The tribal leaders' accounts indicate that they experience that females pass their negative perceptions of men on to their children. This can be understood in terms of how culture is transmitted through socialisation that includes (1) formal teaching and rules and (2) enculturation that includes subtle teaching in the course of everyday life (Schriver, 2011). These accounts of males being prevented to engage with children link to the previous discussion on the diminished social role of fathers. It is possible that the perception of all men as potential perpetrators of sexual abuse further weaken the social role of fathers. The researcher concludes that this can be seen as a contributing factor behind males spending little time in caring for their children, and in turn, protecting their children from sexual abuse.

4.11 Strengthening protection of children from sexual abuse

Participants' accounts included suggestions on how families' protection of children from sexual abuse can be strengthened. These suggestions addressed some issues and risk factors identified in previous themes in terms of (1) a limited definition of child sexual abuse, (2) adults not communicating with children about child sexual abuse, (3) families hiding cases of child sexual abuse, (4) stigma and the code of silence in relation to child sexual abuse in the community and (5) females carrying the sole responsibility of protecting children from sexual abuse.

4.11.1 Open communication in families about child sexual abuse

The participants shared that there is a need for parents and adults to begin to communicate with children about child sexual abuse in order to educate and build resilience. They also shared that this will help children to report incidences of child sexual abuse, as illustrated in the following quotes.

Agnes: *“To all the parents who have not experienced this. It would be best they talk to their children about situations like these.”*

Anele: *“They must tell their children how important their bodies are.”*

Fathers: *“I should sit down with my child and be open so that when something happens to them they will feel free to tell me.”*

Traditional healers: *“They should know these things but in a way that suits their age as it was done to us.”*

Mothers: *“We as parents should be open to children.”*

Focus group participants also referred to the need for families to break the code of silence surrounding child sexual abuse and to communicate with each other about how to protect children from sexual abuse, as exemplified in the following quotes.

Traditional healers: *“It should not be kept a family secret because it shows that the family likes what was done to the child and they are working with the person that raped the child.”*

Traditional healers: *“It should not be a secret. People should know that a child has been raped. When you hide a criminal they continue.”*

Mothers: *“As families we should talk about sexual abuse.”*

Participants addressed the fact that families do not communicate with their children about child sexual abuse. Their suggestions of strategies were in line with those previously discussed with regards to communicating with children about sexual abuse as highlighted by Bagley and Thurston (1996). The results and previous themes show that:

- Parents are not implementing these strategies.
- Parents experience that they do not know how to implement these strategies.
- Parents are fearful with regards to communicating with children about sexual abuse.

This indicates that families may need assistance and guidance to implement strategies which involve communication with their children. The suggestions also included breaking the code of silence in relation to child sexual abuse. This is relevant as previous themes indicated that factors such as stigma, shame and taboos prevent families from protecting children from sexual abuse.

4.11.2 Open communication in the community about child sexual abuse

Some of the focus group participants' suggestions involved communicating and attempting to deal with the issue of child sexual abuse in the community. The following quotes refer to the importance of communication about child sexual abuse.

Church leaders: *"It is important that there should be people motivating the community not to hide things because they say they are a disgrace."*

Mothers: *"The community needs to sit down and talk about this thing because we know the causes of sexual abuse."*

Traditional healers: *"Each Ward should hold meetings and advise children and parents."*

The participants' accounts indicated that prevention needs to focus on breaking the code of silence on meso level as well as on micro level as mentioned earlier. This would involve challenging and overcoming taboos and stigma which previous themes indicated exist within both these systems. This correlates with the view of Killian and Brakarsh (2004) in terms of the need for both families and the community to communicate about child sexual abuse. The participants' suggestions of mobilising the community around the topic of child sexual abuse relates to the need highlighted by Herman and Van den Heever (2010) of community interventions. The suggestion of each ward holding meetings to advice children and parents correlates with community forums where families can report cases of child sexual abuse, as suggested by Marshall and Herman (2000).

4.11.3 Educational workshops on child sexual abuse

Other suggestions from focus group participants included educating families and the community about child sexual abuse. The following quotes include such suggestions.

Fathers: *"We need information as parents because these things happen."*

Tribal leaders: *"There should be a campaign to teach people about child abuse."*

Church leaders: *"The community should be called and educated on child abuse."*

The tribal leaders and the church leaders also express that they need educational workshops in order to improve their responses to child sexual abuse.

Tribal leaders: *"Do a workshop and give us advice on how we can deal with cases of abuse. Because as of now we just do what we think is right we do not have the knowledge."*

Church leaders: *"I think that we as old people are not educated and knowledgeable. We should be educated on what steps we should take when a situation has come up."*

The participants confirmed what previous themes identified in terms of the need to teach families and the community about child sexual abuse. Bagley and Thurston (1996) point out that programmes that attempt to involve parents and carers are often challenged with poor attendance. Some of the community leaders suggested these types of programmes. This means that it might be possible to use community leaders to mobilise carers and parents in order to address the issue of poor attendance. Previous themes indicated that community leaders played an important role in identifying and responding to child sexual abuse. Thus it is significant that church leaders and tribal leaders expressed that they want to attend a workshop in order to improve the way that they deal with these cases. This relates to the need for closer co-operation between the child protection system and indigenous leadership (Mbambo & Phiyega, 2004). It also indicates an opportunity to address earlier indications of the need for community leaders to report cases to the police and to a social worker rather than solely families of victims.

4.11.4 Both parents caring for children

The participants suggested that one way to strengthen protection of children from sexual abuse is for males to be involved in caring for children. They also raised the point that mothers and fathers need to work together to raise their children as illustrated in the quotes below.

Phumlani: *“I was raised without having a father when growing up. Because of that I see a big need to be there for my children. Because the way I am is the result of growing up without a father to guide me. I did not finish school and I have been in jail myself. I do not want those things to happen to my children.”*

Tribal leaders: *“If we as men are not active in our families’ the wellbeing of our children will go astray.”*

Fathers: *“We as fathers should also take responsibility and be able to recognise our children when they have problems, we should not expect mothers to do that alone. Our children should not be scared of us.”*

Fathers: "It is not easy but it is important for a child to stay with both parents so that they can be able to see when something is not right."

Mothers: *"Fathers should be friendly to their children. They shouldn't have much dignity so that their children are not scared to talk to them when they have problems."*

Tribal leaders: *"Mothers should first make sure that they work as a team with fathers to raise their children so that children will grow up knowing that they should work as a team with their parents. The problems we face are because everyone is operating in isolation."*

Participants addressed how males were not involved in caring for their children as illustrated and discussed in relation to previous themes. It is significant to note that male accounts indicate an awareness of this issue and a willingness to address it. The participants seem to share the view of Marshall and Herman (2000) who point to the need for shared parental responsibility between males and females and for males to play an active role in the lives of their children.

4.11.5 Parenting skills

The tribal leaders shared that they believe that there is a need to develop the role of parents in the community as indicated below.

Tribal leaders: *"So they can understand what it means to be a parent. They will learn how to supervise their children, playing, making sure they are safe when playing, giving attention to their children when speaking because what children say gives parents an idea of how much they know and what happens when they play with their friends."*

The tribal leaders were the only group of participants to refer to the need to address other risk factors indicated in earlier themes such as lack of adult supervision and parents being emotionally unavailable. This indicates that tribal leaders in KwaNzimakwe may be valuable in terms of mobilising parenting skills. This is also

significant as it indicates the possibility of finding community leaders in other communities that would be in support of parenting skills.

4.11.6 Cultural practice

The traditional healers suggested that the protection of children from sexual abuse can be strengthened by bringing back lost cultural practices. The tribal leaders on the other hand pointed to the need to develop cultural practices that are relevant today. The following quotes show these variations in opinions.

Traditional healers: *“Boys that we grew up with never knew about rape they were honest and they were taught how to treat a woman. They were even scared of drinking in front of adults they drank privately.”*

Traditional healers: *“What we can do is bring back the old culture, sports grounds should be built for children to keep them away from the streets and prevent them doing wrong things. There should also be people to train the children.”*

Traditional healers: *“Time to talk to their mother. We should bring back the culture when a girl entered adulthood they used to be shaved and they would go and bath in river naked and come back and get advice from women.”*

Tribal leaders: *“We cannot go back and live in the past but we need to make our own cultures based on situations we are currently faced with.”*

The accounts by the traditional healers correlate with what Mungazi (1996) highlights regarding family customs that were strong for centuries, either disappearing or weakening. Their suggestions correspond with the view of Plummer and Njuguna (2009) in relation to how prevention of child sexual abuse needs to incorporate culture and strength inherent in African communities. The point that is made by the tribal leaders does not necessary contradict this view but can rather be understood from an ecosystem perspective. The tribal leaders' account point to how the current social environment is significantly different from the environment which suited past cultural practices. They indicate that families need to adapt and develop new ways to

protect children from sexual abuse as they are faced with new challenges and demands.

4.12 Conclusion

This chapter presented findings with regards to families' detection, responses and protection of children with regards to sexual abuse. It also revealed how various perceptions and socio-cultural factors influence families' protection of children from sexual abuse. The following chapter will summarise these findings and conclude the research project.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the overall findings of the study together with a discussion of the recommendations and conclusions that emanated from these findings. The themes that were discussed in the preceding chapter will be presented in relation to the overall aim and the objectives of the research project.

The study aimed to explore families' protection of young children from sexual abuse as experienced and perceived by families and community leaders in KwaNzimakwe, KwaZulu-Natal. The study objectives included (1) exploring perceptions pertinent to child sexual abuse, (2) ascertaining how families protect and respond in relation to child sexual abuse, (3) exploring the influence of socio-cultural factors on families' protection of young children from sexual abuse and (4) determining ways that families and community leaders believe that families' protection of children from sexual abuse can be strengthened.

The study applied ecosystems theory with regards to how the social environment influences families' protection of children from sexual abuse. A social constructionism perspective was also applied with regards to how families construct meaning from their protection of children from sexual abuse.

The research employed a qualitative approach which applied a descriptive and exploratory research design. Qualitative data was collected using semi-structured individual interviews and focus group discussions. In-depth individual interviews were utilised in order to explore the stories of family members with past experience of child sexual abuse. Focus group discussions were carried out to explore the experiences and perceptions of parents and community leaders in relation to child sexual abuse.

The first section of this chapter summarises (1) detection of child sexual abuse, (2) families' responses to child sexual abuse and relevant socio-cultural influences, and

(3) families' protection of young children from sexual abuse and relevant socio-cultural influences. The core value of the study was to seek the communities' perspective on child sexual abuse. Thus the findings included scope for locally relevant prevention programmes and suggestions by participants with regards to ways to strengthen families' protection of children from sexual abuse. The second section of this chapter incorporates these suggestions and presents recommendations with regards to prevention and further research.

5.2 Detection of child sexual abuse

The findings showed that families detected child sexual abuse through (1) investigating signs of child sexual abuse, (2) disclosure from the child and (3) reports from community members and community leaders. The findings indicated that gentle questioning and probing aid children to disclose child sexual abuse (Bagley &Thurston, 1996). The findings concur with previous research (Collings, 2008) as it showed that third parties such as community members or community leaders are instrumental in detecting child sexual abuse.

The study also revealed that the community were unlikely to intervene in cases of child sexual abuse perpetrated by a relative in order to respect families' privacy. This confirms the existence of perceptions of child sexual abuse as a private matter (Jewkes et al., 2005). The results indicated that community leaders perceived their role in relation to child sexual abuse as one of reporting detected cases to the victims' families. Thus cases of child sexual abuse detected by the community may not be reported when the victims' families choose not to do so.

5.3 Families perceptions in relation to child sexual abuse

The study revealed significant perceptions in relation to child sexual abuse that potentially influences families' protection of their children, (1) narrow definition of child sexual abuse (Collings, 2005) (2) limited awareness with regards to potential victims of child sexual abuse (Stevens et al., 2004) and (3) misconceptions that there will be physical signs of child sexual abuse (Babatsikos ,2010).

The results indicated that families mainly defined child sexual abuse as involving penetration and that they perceived that there will be physical signs of child sexual abuse. This affects families' protection of children from sexual abuse, as other forms of child sexual abuse may go undetected and other signs of child sexual abuse may be ignored (Collings, 2005).

The study also showed that families minimised the potential risk of child sexual abuse occurring in their own families. This confirms findings with regards to parents perceptions of child sexual abuse in the study by Ige and Fawole (2011). The family members in the study perceived the risk of either males or young children being sexually abused as low. These perceptions may potentially result in, families being less attentive and protective in relation to child sexual abuse when it comes to males and young children.

Conclusions can be made that it appears as if families' perceptions of child sexual abuse affect the way they protect their children. This correlates with a social constructionism perspective as social constructions bring with them different kinds of human actions (Burr, 2003).

5.4 Findings in relation to families' responses

5.4.1 Overview of families' responses to child sexual abuse

The study revealed the following with regards to families 'responses to child sexual abuse:

- Mainly females respond to child sexual abuse
- Reports of child sexual abuse are generally made to the police or a health facility.
- The community substitutes reports to the police or a health facility by independently dealing with the perpetrator of child sexual abuse.
- The community, families and mothers participate in hiding and covering up cases of child sexual abuse.

- Families believe that children at times are to blame for incidences of child sexual abuse and act accordingly.

5.4.2 Mainly females respond to child sexual abuse

The study revealed that females generally respond to cases of child sexual abuse as:

- The sampling process produced 10 women and two men who had been involved in dealing with the incidence of child sexual abuse.
- Accounts included female family members actively responding to child sexual abuse.
- Focus group participants confirmed that mainly females respond to child sexual abuse.

The trend of females responding to cases of child sexual abuse confirms that women take the most active role in protecting children from sexual abuse (Jewkes et al., 2005). The findings also showed that male family members who participated in the study played a peripheral role with regards to responding to child sexual abuse. The focus group participants pointed out that fathers generally play a non-existent role in responding to child sexual abuse. They explained that females normally detect child sexual abuse and that females do not consult males in relation to child sexual abuse.

Most female family members with past experiences of child sexual abuse, described how they discovered child sexual abuse by investigating signs of child sexual abuse or by probing children to disclose sexual abuse. Their accounts showed that child sexual abuse was detected during the course of care activities. These findings correlate with males spending little time on care activities and having a weaker bond with their children than females (Budlender & Lund, 2011; Magwaza, 1997). Hence the limited role that males play in the lives of children result in them not detecting child sexual abuse.

The findings also indicated that females appeared to not expect males to deal with the issue of child sexual abuse. This relates to how male participants on the other

hand shared that they are not consulted with regards to child sexual abuse. The study further revealed that this links to gender roles which will be discussed further, later on in this chapter.

5.4.3 Reports of child sexual abuse

The results showed that family members reported cases of child sexual abuse straight to the police but that it was most common for family members to first take the child to a health facility to confirm that the child had been sexually abused. Family members decided to report cases of child sexual abuse in order for the police to arrest the perpetrator. The findings showed that families reported child sexual abuse in order to ensure the safety of the victims in accordance with Collings (1997). The study revealed that families' choices in terms of reporting cases to a health facility or to the police were based on trust in legal and social structures that comprise part of the child protection system.

5.4.4 Practices which substitute reports of child sexual abuse

The findings showed that reports to the police or a health facility sometimes were substituted by other practices in the community. The focus group participants consisting of both parents and community leaders shared that these practices target the perpetrator of child sexual abuse. They described practices similar to those presented by Magwaza (1997) and van Niekerk (2002) when family members and/or the community take the law into their own hands and punish the perpetrator. The participants' accounts indicated that this either involved beating the perpetrator and/or making the perpetrator pay a fine to the victim's family.

Perpetrators compensating the victim's family did not appear to be accepted by everyone in the community. Participant's arguments against this practice were based on experiences that the perpetrator then continues to sexually abuse the child as he feels entitled to do so. The arguments made by the participants correspond with those made by Magwaza (1997) against perpetrators paying a fine to the victims' family, which is common in South Africa (Jewkes et al., 2005).

5.4.5 Cases of child sexual abuse being covered up

The findings indicated that cases of child sexual abuse are continuously being covered up in the community by families and mothers. The study revealed that family members including mothers tell children to keep incidences of sexual abuse a secret. Participants testified to how this type of secrecy leads to continuation of sexual abuse. They also highlighted that children who disclose child sexual abuse, but are told to keep it a secret, learn that sexual abuse is acceptable. This indicates the need for prevention programmes that target children to teach them that sexual abuse should not be kept a secret and that it is not acceptable. The indications that the issue of child sexual abuse may remain hidden within the community also points to the need to ensure that there are spaces in the community where children can report sexual abuse in accordance with Marshall and Herman (2000).

5.4.6 Blame and added guilt on child victims of sexual abuse

Some family members responded to child sexual abuse through words or actions that indicated that they blamed the child for the incidence, which is not uncommon in South Africa (Jewkes et al., 2005). The participants indicated that a victim is to blame for the incidence of child sexual abuse due to his/her behaviour or due to the way that he/she dresses. These findings, in terms of reasons for families to blame children for incidences of child sexual abuse, correspond with those identified by Collings (1997, in Stevens et al., 2004).

5.5 Socio-cultural factors influencing families' responses

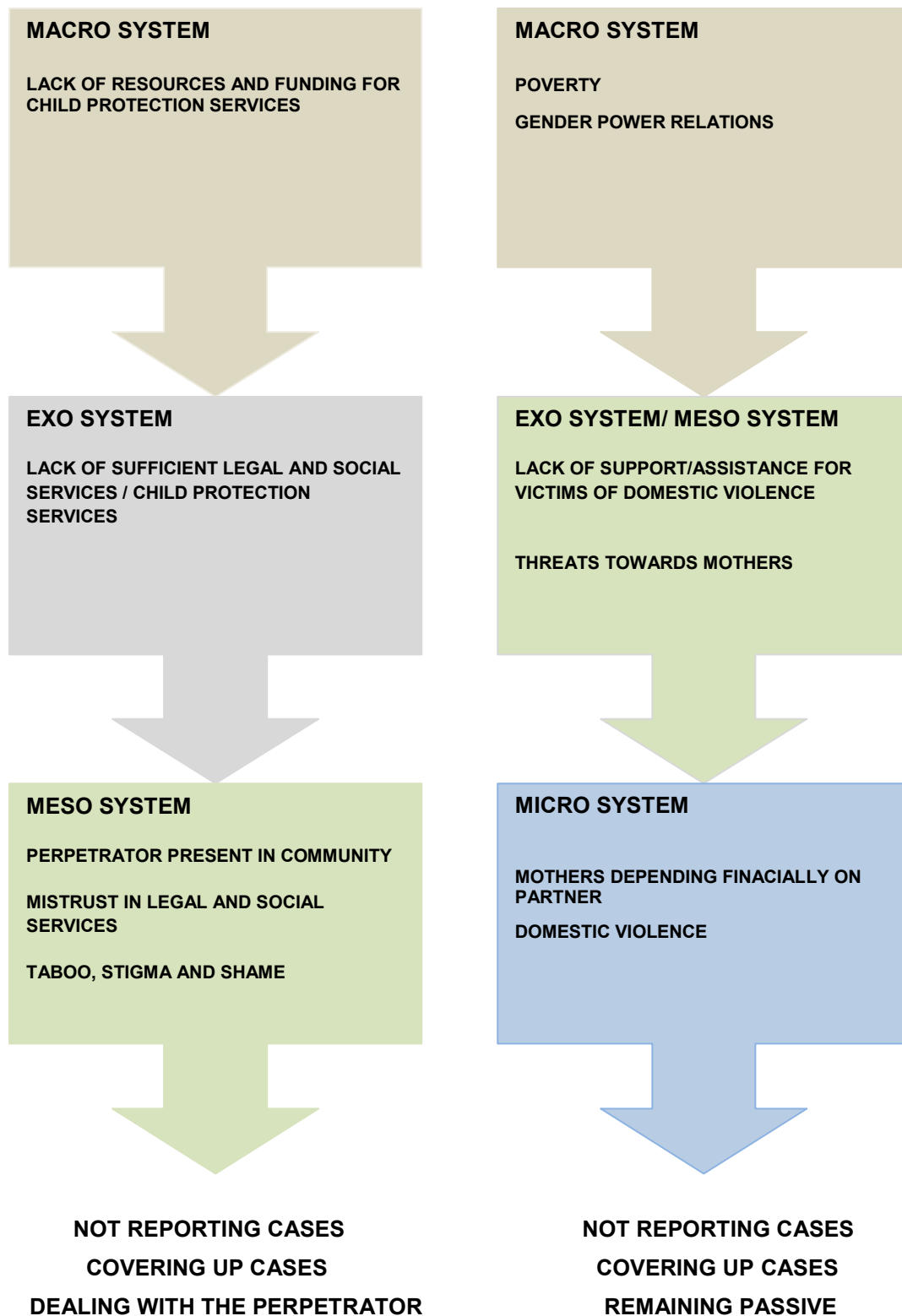
5.5.1 Overview of socio-cultural influences

The socio-cultural context does, as discussed in chapter one, includes how society influences families (Schraver, 2011). In this regard findings showed how factors such as, (1) poverty, (2) gender power relations and (3) legal and social services potentially influence families' responses to child sexual abuse.

The socio-cultural context also includes how families attach meaning to life events (Schrivver, 2011). The study revealed perceptions among families in relation to events surrounding the incidence of child sexual abuse which relate to, (1) mistrust in the child protection system and (2) taboos, stigma and shame associated with child sexual abuse.

The study revealed that many socio-cultural factors were interrelated. The illustration on the following page presents the main findings of influences on families' responses and influences on mothers' responses, in relation to the macro system, the exo system, the meso system and the micro system. These two processes have been separated as findings indicated certain factors pertinent to mothers' responses. The study revealed that the main influences on families' responses to child sexual abuse related to (1) insufficiencies in terms of legal and social services and (2) taboos, stigma and shame attached to child sexual abuse. The main findings in terms of influences in mothers' responses were (1) poverty and mothers depending financially on perpetrators and (2) gender power relations and domestic violence.

Figure 1: Influences on families' and mothers' responses



5.5.2 Influences pertinent to families' responses

5.5.2.1 Insufficiencies in terms of legal and social services

The findings indicated experiences of failure of the legal system as the majority of perpetrators remain in the community. Family members also described failure by legal and social service structures in terms of lack of information, lack of follow up and lack of psycho-social services.

The study revealed that one of the major reasons for families not to report cases of child sexual abuse is experienced failure in relation to the child protection system. The participants' accounts indicated mistrust and low expectations with regards to the legal system as they mentioned the lack of responses from the police, the social service system specifically the lack of responses by social workers. They attributed failures of the child protection system to perpetrators escaping the criminal justice system. These experiences of perpetrators walking free corresponded with accounts by Marshall and Herman (2000), Loffell (2002) and van Niekerk (2002). Some participants appeared to perceive it to be pointless to report cases of child sexual abuse. This corresponds with the opinion of a medical doctor based in a rural area in South Africa (van Niekerk, 2002).

The study also showed how a lack of services affects families and victims with regards to psycho-social needs of remaining unaddressed. The family members also experienced helplessness and fear due to being unable to protect their children from perpetrators that remain in the community.

The findings illustrate how families' ability to protect children from sexual abuse is influenced by a lack of interventions and services in the community. The participants experienced that the child protection system did not meet their needs of information, follow up and ensuring the safety of their children. This illustrates poor person in environment fit according to ecosystems theory (Kirst-Ashman, 2008). The researcher notes that insufficiencies in services on exo level are attributed to lack of allocated funding and resources on macro level (Loffell, 2004).

5.5.2.2 Taboos, stigma and shame in relation to child sexual abuse

The study confirmed that taboos, stigma and shame in relation to child sexual abuse exist within the community in accordance with Jewkes et al. (2005) and van Niekerk (2002). The findings also illustrate how taboo, stigma and shame affect (1) families' responses to child sexual abuse and (2) the way that community leaders deal with cases of child sexual abuse.

The results showed that families sometimes cover up and fail to report cases of child sexual abuse due to stigma and shame within the community. The focus group participants articulated this in terms of families protecting their name in the community.

Community leaders shared that their role includes identifying cases of child sexual abuse and reporting these to the relevant family. They stipulated that they report matters to the victim's family and that they generally do not want to overstep this boundary despite legal obligation to do so in accordance with the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences & Related Matters) Amendment Act (2007). Hence the study revealed that community leaders are affected by perceptions of taboo, stigma and shame in relation to child sexual abuse as they aid in hiding incidences of child sexual abuse to protect the victim's family. The findings showed that child sexual abuse perpetrated by a relative is surrounded by the most secrecy and is accompanied by little interference by the community and community leaders.

The results showed that family members who report cases of child sexual abuse receive little support in the community and at times are labelled as "bad people by the community. This relates to the normalisation of child sexual abuse (Townsend & Dawes, 2004) and it being socially accepted by the community (Guma & Henda, 2004).

5.5.3 Influences pertinent to mothers' responses

The study revealed that mothers' responses to child sexual abuse are influenced by similar socio-cultural factors to those presented above. It did however also reveal certain factors which are pertinent to mothers, as they result in increased vulnerability among mothers who are faced with the discovery of child sexual abuse. Findings showed that increased vulnerability among mothers significantly influences how they respond to child sexual abuse.

5.5.3.1 Financial dependency

The study revealed poverty as an underlying factor in terms of mothers' responses to child sexual abuse. Results showed that some mothers choose not to report cases of child sexual abuse as they depend financially on the perpetrators.

5.5.3.2 Domestic violence

The study indicated how situations of domestic violence may render mothers powerless to respond to instances of child sexual abuse. Accounts implied that mothers who are abused by their partners are inclined to remain passive following discovery of child sexual abuse. The findings further indicated that mothers' passiveness is intensified by lack of support from the family, the community and/or the police.

One of the participants in the study experienced lack of support and assistance when she reported being abused by her husband. This exemplifies the impact of gender roles and power relations, as Richter et al. (2004) point out, these power relations give men the power to abuse and they contribute to the abuse of women being socially accepted.

5.5.3.3 Threats to reporting of cases

Family members' and focus group participants' accounts included testimonies of threats specifically directed at mothers. The results showed threats commonly are made by the perpetrator or the perpetrator's family in order to convince the mother not to report incidents of child sexual abuse.

5.6 Families lack support to respond to child sexual abuse

The results included accounts by family members of weak support when responding to child sexual abuse within both the meso system and the exo system. They encountered weak assistance from community members, from the legal system and from social service providers. The findings showed that families who pursue cases of child sexual abuse are likely to find themselves alone and vulnerable. The study revealed added vulnerability among women who respond to child sexual abuse as they appear to not receive support and assistance from fathers or male family members.

The findings point to a lack of support and services for family members and particularly women who attempt to pursue cases of child sexual abuse. The researcher notes that this is bound to have devastating effects on families' responses to child sexual abuse as Kirst-Ashman (2008) highlights that all individuals depend on input, support and services from others.

5.7 Findings in relation to families' protection of children

5.7.1 Overview of families' protection of children from sexual abuse

The study revealed the following with regards to families' protection of children from sexual abuse:

- There are few methods applied by families to protect children from sexual abuse.
- Past experience of child sexual abuse leads to families applying increased protection of children.
- Families send their children to crèche to ensure adult supervision.
- Children are not being supervised while in the care of adults at home.
- Adults are emotionally unavailable in relation to children.
- Families do not communicate with children about child sexual abuse.
- Children are not guided by adults to ensure their safety.

5.7.2 Families apply limited protection of children from sexual abuse

The study revealed that the participants identified significantly few methods in relation to how families protect their children from sexual abuse. Instead their accounts mainly covered limitations and challenges in terms of families' protection of children from sexual abuse.

5.7.3 Families with past experience of child sexual abuse

The study revealed how families with past experience of child sexual abuse attempted to implement increased protection of children. These families either implemented closer supervision of their children or began to communicate with their children about child sexual abuse.

5.7.4 Families sending children to crèche

The participants shared that arranging for children to attend crèche is one way for families to protect their children from sexual abuse. However the findings did not include possible challenges that families may experience in terms of being able to send their children to crèche.

5.7.5 Lack of adult supervision

The study revealed that some participants identify adult supervision as a factor that renders children vulnerable to child sexual abuse. Participants testified to children (1) being left alone at home, (2) not being supervised when playing and (3) living alone without adult carers. These testimonies need to be understood in the context of poverty and the HIV/AIDS epidemic as these factors weaken or prevent adult supervision of children (Jewkes, 2004; Jewkes et al., 2005; Lachman, 2004; Marshall & Herman, 2000; Townsend & Dawes, 2004; van Niekerk, 2002).

The focus group participants also highlighted that families with substance abuse fail to supervise their children and to care adequately for their needs. The study revealed

that children in these families are vulnerable to child sexual abuse and that prevention strategies therefore need to target these children and their families.

The findings also indicated that some families are unaware of the potential risks of child sexual abuse and of leaving children unsupervised. This confirms findings by Swart-Kruger (2004) and Ige and Fawole (2011) in terms of parents leaving children unsupervised as they believe that they can look after themselves. It appears that families' perceptions effect the extent that they supervise their children, which correlates with a social constructionism perspective.

5.7.6 Adults being emotionally unavailable

The results highlight that adults do not spend quality time with their children communicating and listening to them. The participants expressed that parents do not pay attention to their children. Bagley and Thurston (1996) reveal that this affects their ability to prevent and/or detect incidents of child sexual abuse.

5.7.7 Lack of communication with children about sexual abuse

The findings indicated that families do not communicate with their children about child sexual abuse and that they are reluctant to do so. The study revealed that this reluctance is based on fear and feelings of not knowing how to communicate with children about sexual abuse. The study by Babatsikos (2010) confirms that parents avoid communicating with children about sexual abuse as they perceive it as difficult.

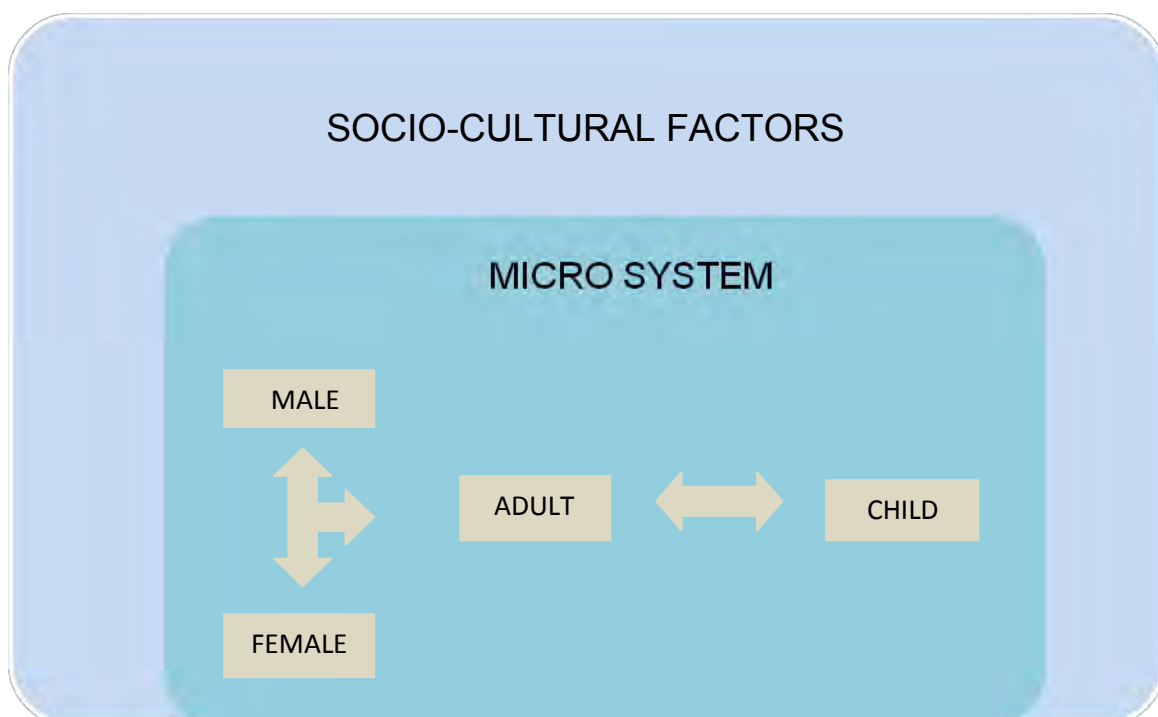
5.8 Socio-cultural factors influencing families' protection of children

5.8.1 Overview of socio-cultural influences

Vosler (1999) describes the family as a system where individual members influence each other. The findings indicated how individual members in the micro system influence each other with regards to (1) adults and children and (2) males and females. The study also revealed how these relationships influence families' protection of children from sexual abuse. Families' functioning in terms of protection

of children from sexual abuse needs to be understood in relation to the family systems' maintenance and adaption to the environment according to Longres (1995). The following illustration portrays how individual members influence each other within the micro system in accordance with the results indicated in the study. It also highlights that the micro system is influenced by socio-cultural factors in the environment.

Figure 2: Influences on families' protection of children



5.8.2 Females and males

The findings indicated that fathers are absent from the lives of their children and that they therefore fulfil a limited role in protecting children from sexual abuse. The results showed that one reason for fathers' being absent from the lives of their children is that they often do not reside with them. This is, as earlier discussed, linked to a combination of socio-cultural factors which prevent males to fulfil the social role of fatherhood. Two significant factors include high unemployment and low rates of marriage (Hunter, 2004). Hunter (2004) points out that men fail to afford to get married as cultural practice stipulates that they must first pay lobolo (bride

wealth). The absence of fathers also needs to be understood in relation to the history of apartheid and migrant labour (Marshall & Herman, 2000).

The results further confirmed a lack of bonding between males and their children (Budlender & Lund, 2011). Participants shared how children do not communicate with males and that children are fearful of men. The study revealed that gender roles appear to contribute to mainly women protecting children from sexual abuse. This was illustrated as female participants' accounts point to perceptions and expectations of females as the ones who care for children and males in a sense as unsuitable to care for children. Another factor which appeared to result in the absence of males in the lives of children was a dominant perception of males as potential perpetrators of child sexual abuse. Females described how they do not leave children in the care of males, while males described how they are prevented by females to interact with children. The researcher concludes that this in a sense add to weaken the already diminishing social role of fathers (Hunter, 2004).

The focus group participants pointed out that stepfathers are common perpetrators of child sexual abuse and attributed this to stepfathers believing that it is their right to sexually abuse children who they care for. It appears that these perceptions among stepfathers increase the number of cases of child sexual abuse.

5.8.3 Adults and children

The participants accounted for many challenges in protecting their children from sexual abuse which related to adults' relationship and care for children. Adults were said to (1) be emotionally unavailable for their children and (2) not communicate with their children about child sexual abuse, (3) not supervise children and (4) struggle to guide and discipline children.

Poverty does result in families being emotionally unavailable in the lives of their children as it puts stress and strain on the family who become occupied with basic survival (Marshall and Herman, 2000). Marshall and Herman (2000) conclude that poverty may result in parenting becoming purely about providing shelter and food for children. The link between poverty and parents being emotionally unavailable can

possibly explain why families in the study did not identify many ways in which they protect their children from sexual abuse. The results indicated that parents struggle to communicate with their children about child sexual abuse. This too links to parents being emotionally distant from their children. It will be difficult for families who do not communicate and listen to each other to address a sensitive topic such as child sexual abuse.

The study revealed that families are prevented from supervising their children when they are forced to seek employment away from home. The results also show that families leave their children unsupervised because they think that the children can look after themselves and not solely because they are forced to do so.

The participants expressed that they struggle to guide and discipline their children. They further reflected on how this prevents them from keeping their children safe. The study revealed that adults believe that they are unable to guide and discipline children due to legal frameworks that promote children's rights. They appear to experience difficulties as they no longer are permitted to discipline their children as they once were taught by their parents. The researcher concludes that enhanced protection of children from sexual abuse can be achieved if adults find ways to guide and discipline their children sufficiently.

5.9 Recommendations of prevention strategies

5.9.1 Primary prevention

Primary prevention aims to address and reduce the occurrence of child sexual abuse in accordance with Burkhardt and Rotatori (1995).

5.9.1.1 Strengthening the social role of fathers

Lofell (2004) points out that prevention programmes in South Africa need to strengthen families. The participants suggested that one way of strengthening families is for fathers to play a more active role in the lives of their children. This view

is shared by Marshall and Herman (2000) who point to the need for shared parental responsibility between males and females.

The researcher concludes that prevention programmes need to strengthen the social role of fathers in order to strengthen families' protection of children from sexual abuse. The male participants expressed that they want to play a more active role in the lives of their children. Hence the researcher recommends programmes that target men and facilitates various discussions with the aim for males to realise that they are needed in families and in the lives of children.

The study also suggests the need for awareness campaigns in relation to the importance of strengthening the social role of fathers. These campaigns need to take place within all systemic levels as various socio-cultural factors aid in diminishing the social role of fathers. The findings indicated that this needs to include challenging gender roles that prevent males to play an active role in the lives of children.

The study also highlighted how historical and social forces result in men being physically and emotionally removed from their families and their children. The researcher recommends public awareness and debate within all spheres of society that acknowledges these forces and fosters solutions that bridge the gap between males and their families. This is important as the study suggests the need to avoid the trap of focusing on the failure of fathers, as this alienates men and feeds in to perceptions that further distance men from their children.

5.9.1.2 Reconcile men with their families

The findings revealed that perceptions among females, about men and their ability to care for children, in a sense prevent men from playing an active role in the lives of children. The study highlighted that females pass these perceptions on to children and that many children, to a certain extent, are wary of men. It further indicated that because women have experienced failure by men they no longer count on men when it comes to difficult issues such as child sexual abuse.

The study concludes that it is necessary to reconcile men with their families in order for men to play a role in responding to child sexual abuse and in protecting children from sexual abuse. The researcher recommends couple counselling and family counselling to address this issue. Further recommendations involve programmes that target females and males to discuss and address their respective roles in order to enhance care and protection of children.

5.9.1.3 Strengthening the relationship between adults and children

Various factors were found which weakened the relationship between adults and children. The study further revealed that weaknesses in this relationship equalled weaknesses in the protection of children from sexual abuse. The findings showed that parents/carers are emotionally distant due to life's stresses and demands.

The researcher suggests that prevention programmes should create opportunities for parents/carers to get away from these demands and spend time with their children. These programmes could be designed to create a break for families and facilitate quality time for the family. The researcher notes that the design may vary depending on resources and the wishes of participants. Family time may be created by assisting families at home or by providing an opportunity for families to go away. This also needs to include facilitating improved communication in families. This is vital as carers/parents need to engage with their children in order to detect abuse and in order to build resilience in children, in accordance with Bagley and Thurston (1996). There is also a need to assist families to be comfortable and confident to communicate with their children about child sexual abuse.

5.9.1.4 Create awareness of the importance of adult supervision

The findings showed that families sometimes are unaware of the need to supervise their children. Thus prevention programmes need to create awareness among families in terms of the risk of child sexual abuse and the importance of adult supervision. This can be done through parenting skills classes as suggested by the tribal leaders that participated in the study. The study revealed that there is a

particular need to cover misconceptions with regards to child sexual abuse of young children and of males.

5.9.1.5 Address challenges to guide and discipline children

The study showed that adults struggle to discipline their children due to clashes between old and new practices and customs. This related to new demands and legal frameworks which appeared to leave adults feeling like they had no way of setting boundaries and rules for their children. The researcher sensed confusion and disempowerment among parents/carers in relation to this topic. Hence there is a need for workshops in order to allow these voices to be heard and to clarify confusion with regards to children's rights and responsibilities.

The researcher further recommends parenting skills classes in order to address (1) the role of adults in guiding and keeping children safe, (2) ways of keeping children safe from sexual abuse and (3) ways for adults to set rules and consequences for children. These classes need to be accompanied by family counselling in order to facilitate communication and implementation of the topics covered during parenting skills. Particular emphasis on keeping children safe is recommended for these sessions.

5.9.1.6 Target families with a history of substance abuse

Madu (2003) argues that prevention needs to focus on supporting vulnerable children and families to reduce risk factors related to abuse. The study showed that one factor that renders children vulnerable to sexual abuse is substance abuse. The researcher concludes the need for preventative interventions which supports children in families with substance abuse and targets the issue of substance abuse. Targeting the issue of substance abuse in families is complex and falls outside the scope of the current research project. However the study suggests that prevention programmes need to support and build resilience among children in families with substance abuse. The researcher therefore recommends support groups for children in families with substance abuse.

5.9.1.7 Target families with a history of domestic violence

The study showed that children in families with domestic violence are vulnerable to sexual abuse. The need for support groups is once again highlighted but this time for children in families with domestic violence.

The researcher also recommends programmes that targets acceptance of domestic violence as the study revealed passiveness on both meso level and on exo level in relation to this issue. Further recommendations include programmes which offer support and assistance for victims of domestic violence.

5.9.1.8 Target perceptions that justify child sexual abuse

Collings (2007) points to the need to prevent child sexual abuse by promoting healthy relationship patterns which stand in opposition to sexual offending patterns. The findings showed that these offending patterns need to stand in opposition to perceptions which promotes and entitles child sexual abuse by stepfathers. Thus the researcher concludes that prevention programmes need to promote healthy relationship patterns with regards to stepfathers and their families. This issue is also closely linked to the need to target men in relation to developing healthy sexual practices as highlighted by September (2004) and Jewkes et al. (2005). The researcher recommends that prevention programmes target perceptions among men that justify child sexual abuse, particularly among stepfathers.

5.9.1.9 Community based approaches

The participants suggested for the community to come together and find ways of addressing the issue of child sexual abuse. The study showed that such discussions need to involve men in order for them to no longer experience the issue of child sexual abuse as a threat but an issue in the community which requires their input. The researcher concludes that prevention programmes need to facilitate for the community to identify ways to address child sexual abuse, as this will ensure that local initiative and knowledge is utilised. This corresponds with the view of Plummer

and Njuguna (2009) in relation to how prevention of child sexual abuse needs to incorporate culture and strengths inherent in African communities.

The study also revealed that some participants highlighted the need to bring back inherent customs which have been lost in order to strengthen families' protection of children from sexual abuse. This correlates with Mungazi's (1996) view of how family practices that have been strong for centuries have disappeared or been significantly weakened. Other participants pointed to the need to adapt customs to fit new social issues and demands. The researcher concludes that there is a need for communities to discuss both how to bring back inherent family customs and how to create family customs which allow for sufficient protection of children from sexual abuse.

5.9.2 Secondary prevention

The recommendations in terms of secondary prevention aim to prevent the negative impact on children in cases where child sexual abuse has occurred, in accordance with the definition made by Burkhardt and Rotatori (1995) which was discussed in chapter two. This encompasses ensuring increased detection of child sexual abuse to ensure proper and supportive responses.

5.9.2.1 Address taboos, stigma and shame in relation to child sexual abuse

The participants suggested that families and communities need to start being open to speak about child sexual abuse. This is highly relevant as the study revealed that taboo, stigma and shame in relation to child sexual abuse affects families' protection of children. The study showed that these factors lead to cases of child sexual abuse not being reported and/or families failing to take protective action.

5.9.2.2 Educational workshops on child sexual abuse

Killian and Brakarsh (2004) points to the need for educational workshops with adults regarding abuse in South Africa. While Bagley and Thurston (1996) highlight the need to educate parents/carers about how to respond to reports by children of child sexual abuse, the participants themselves also suggested the need for educational

workshops. The researcher recommends for these workshops to include: (1) how to identify signs of child sexual abuse, (2) how to define child sexual abuse, (3) how to assist children to disclose child sexual abuse, (4) how to avoid adding blame and guilt on the victim and (5) how parents/carers can support victims of child sexual abuse especially with regards to psycho-social needs.

The study revealed that two misconceptions need to be addressed in terms of, (1) the narrow definition of child sexual abuse as involving penetration and (2) the perception that there will be physical signs of sexual abuse. It also pointed to a particular need to discuss and target perceptions which lead to families blaming children for incidences of child sexual abuse. The findings also indicated that educational workshops need to target both families and community leaders in terms of how to respond to child sexual abuse. The researcher notes that there is a particular need to focus on how men can respond to child sexual abuse and how men can assist victims of child sexual abuse.

5.9.2.3 Psycho-social support

The study revealed that prevention programmes need to include psycho-social support for victims and their families. The researcher recommends the implementation of such programmes at the community level. These programmes should address the traumatic impact of child sexual abuse and stigma attached to child sexual abuse. The findings showed that there is a particular need to assist and support male victims with regards to shame and stigma that may be associated with the incidences of sexual abuse.

5.9.2.4 Advocacy services

There is a need for advocacy services in the community, as the study indicated that the child protection system often left families confused and disempowered. Families should be able to turn to an advocacy agency for assistance in terms of accessing legal and social services. The researcher recommends for agencies to be located locally so that it is easy for families to turn to them with cases of child sexual abuse.

5.10 Exo level and Macro level recommendations

5.10.1 Tackle poverty

The study showed that poverty affects families' protection of children from sexual abuse. The researcher therefore concludes that addressing child sexual abuse in South Africa encompasses tackling poverty. Mbambo and Phiyega (2004) highlight the need for economic development in order to strengthen families.

5.10.2 Improve legal and social child protection services

The findings indicated that there is a huge need to improve legal and social child protection services. The study clearly illustrated detrimental effects on families related to insufficiencies in terms of these services. These insufficiencies contributed to cases of child sexual abuse not being reported and to psycho-social effects of child sexual abuse not being addressed. The study revealed that this potentially contributes to child sexual abuse escalating in South Africa (Collings, 1997; Keeton, 2004; Lachman, 2004; Lalor, 2004; Loffell, 2002; Madu & Peltzer, 2001). It relates to how a lack of psycho-social services, in conjunction with the risk of male victims identifying with the perpetrator and later victimising others (Burkhardt & Rotatori, 1995), may explain the increase of teenage perpetrators or young adult perpetrators as indicated by van Niekerk (2004) and Collings (2008). The study showed that perpetrators often walk free which creates opportunities for child sexual abuse to continue (Marshall & Herman, 2000). This can be said to further contribute to child sexual abuse escalating.

The researcher concludes that secondary prevention programmes that encourage families to report child sexual abuse need to be rolled out in conjunction with improved child protection services in accordance with Loffell (2004). It is also important to note that improved child protection services need to be accompanied by sufficient budget allocation and resources in terms of legal, social and preventative child protection services.

5.10.3 Utilise indigenous leadership

The study revealed that community leaders identify and deal with cases of child sexual abuse. It also indicated that these leaders struggle to know how to best respond and how to cope with regards to these cases. The researcher concludes that community leaders need to be utilised as a resource by professionals within the child protection system. The researcher recommend that professionals engage with indigenous leaders and equip them to (1) report cases of child sexual abuse, (2) advise families with regards to child sexual abuse and (3) assist families and victims in relation to child sexual abuse. This is closely linked to developing community forums where children can report cases of child sexual abuse (Marshall & Herman, 2000). The researcher further recommends for community leaders and/or community forums to be trained with particular emphasis on the legal obligation of reporting sexual offences against children.

5.11 Recommendations for further research

The researcher recommends research in relation to legal and social child protection services in South Africa. This study highlighted that families experience insufficiencies in the child protection system. Further research therefore needs to evaluate these services and identify how insufficiencies can be addressed. The researcher believes that this type of research is needed in order to create public awareness and debate with regards to the state of child protection services in South Africa.

Further recommendations relate to effective implementation of prevention programmes in relation to child sexual abuse. The study pointed to the potential within the community to address issues in relation to child sexual abuse which highlights the need for participatory action research. It also highlighted various avenues in terms of preventing child sexual abuse. The researcher concludes that there is a need for continuation of research which explores socio-cultural influences in relation to child sexual abuse and for research that evaluates prevention programmes that are being rolled out in South Africa.

5.12 Concluding remarks

The main aim and the objectives of the study were achieved. The study described families' responses to child sexual abuse and their protection of children. It also highlighted various influential perceptions and socio-cultural factors in relation to child sexual abuse.

The study revealed many of the complex issues which relate to the hidden nature of child sexual abuse and cases of child sexual abuse going unreported. It also illustrates how perceptions, socio-cultural factors and insufficiencies in the child protection system contribute to child sexual abuse escalating in South Africa. It indicated various possibilities in order to prevent child sexual abuse and various role players from within the community who are willing to work to address the issue of child sexual abuse.

It is impossible to not be affected by the pain and devastation that families testify to in relation to child sexual abuse. The researchers' final remark is however to urge the reader to not lose hope but rather take action in the fight against child sexual abuse.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Interview guide for individual interviews in English

Section A: Demographic information

Participant

1. Age:
2. Gender: (Female/Male)
3. Employment:
4. Relationship to victim of child sexual abuse:
5. Head of the family:
6. Participant living in same household as victim: Yes/No
7. Number of people in the household:
8. Number of adults in the household:
9. Number of children in the household:
10. Head of the household:
11. Monthly income of the household:

Victim

1. Age of child at the time of incidence of child sexual abuse:
2. Child's gender:

Perpetrator

1. Number of perpetrators:
2. Perpetrators/ perpetrators' relationship with the child victim:
3. Gender of perpetrator/perpetrators: (Female/Male)
4. Age of perpetrator/perpetrators: (Minor/Adult)
5. Current whereabouts of perpetrator/perpetrators:

Section B: Topic guide

1. Experience of young child being sexually abused

- First discovery that your child was being sexually abused
- Information given to you by child and others

2. Own response of to child being sexually abused

- Your feelings
- Your thoughts
- What you said to the child and others
- Your actions

3. Decision making process behind action taken

- Considered alternative actions
- Reasoning for actions not taken and actions taken

4. Other people involved in decision making and their influence

- People you approached for advice and support
- Advice given by these people
- Reasoning to follow or discard this advice

5. Looking back

- Possible wishes of having said or done something different?
- What would have made a difference?
- Your gained insight or learning

6. Looking forward

- Your way of protecting your children from sexual abuse
- Possible wishes that would enable you to better protect children from sexual abuse

Appendix B: Interview guide for individual interviews in Zulu

Isigaba A: Demographic Information

Obambe iqhaza ekuphenduleni imibuzo

1. Mingakhi iminyaka yakho?
2. Ubulili, umuntu wesilisa noma wesifazane?
3. Ingabe uyasebenza noma awusebenzi (uqashiwe na)?
4. Uhlobene kanjani nengane ehlukekile ngokocansi?
5. Ingabe uwena inhloko yomndeni?
6. Nihlala ndawonye nengane ehlukekile?
7. Bangakhi abantu endlini?
8. Bangakhi abantu abadala ohlala nabo ekhaya?
9. Zingakhi izingane ohlala nazo endlini?
10. Ubani omdala ekhaya?
11. Imalini engena njalo ngenyanga ekhaya?

Ohlukumezekile

1. Yayineminyaka emingakhi ingane ngesikhathi yehlelwa yilenhlekelele yokuhlukunyezwa?
2. Ingane umfana noma yintombazane?

Uhlukumezi (Umsolwa)

1. Babebangakhi abahlukekile abathintekayo?
2. Lababahlukekile noma lomhlukekile uhlobene kanjani nengane ehlukekile?
3. Ingabe umhlukekile owesilisa noma owesifazane?
4. Umhlukekile lona umuntu omdala noma omncane?
5. Ngokwazi kwakho lomuntu owahlukekile ingane ukuphi nendawo njengamanje?

Isigababa B: Umgwaqo sihloko

1. Ukwazi Ngokuhlukumezeka ngokocansi kwengane encane

- Uthola okokuqala ukuthi ingane yakho yayihlukunyezwe ngokocansi
- Owakutshelwa yingane nabanye abantu

2. Impendulo yakho owayinika umntwana ohlukunyeziwe

- Imizwa yakho owayiveza
- Imicabango yakho
- Owakusho enganeni nakwabanye abantu
- Izinyathelo owazithatha

3. Isinqumo esenziwe ngemuva kwezinyathelo ezathathwa

- Ezinye izindlela owacabanga ukuzenza
- Isizathu sokungathathi zinyathelo noma sezizinyathelo ezithathiwe

4. Abanye abantu abathintekayo esinqumeni esenziwe kanye neqhaza abalibambile

- Abantu obathintile ukuthola izaluleko noxhaso
- Izaluleko abakunike zona
- Isizathu esenza uzilandele noma ungazilandeli izaluleko zabo

5. Uma ubuka emuva

- Cishe yikuphi ofisa sengathi ngabe wakwenza noma wakusho okuhlukile
- Yimuphi umehluko okwakungawenza
- Okubone kahle noma okufundile

6. Uma ubuka phambili

- Indlela yokuvikela izingane zakho ekuhlukumezweni ngokocansi
- Okungenzeka kube izifiso zakho ezingakusiza ukuthi ukwazi ukuvikela kangcono izingane zakho ekuthini zingahlukumezeki ngokocansi

Appendix: C Focus group guide in English

1. Child sexual abuse in KwaNzimakwe

- Thoughts/feelings about child sexual abuse
- Definition of child sexual abuse
- Thoughts/feelings about causes of child sexual abuse

2. Opinions about cases of child sexual abuse in KwaNzimakwe

- Thoughts/ feelings about children sexually abusing other children
- Thoughts /feelings about children being sexually abused by a parent
- Thoughts/ feelings about children being sexually abused by a person living in the same house hold
- Thoughts /feelings about children being sexually abused by a community member
- Thoughts and feelings about boys/girls being sexually abused

3. The role of families in protecting children from sexual abuse in KwaNzimakwe

- Examples of how families in KwaNzimakwe respond to child sexual abuse
- Examples of challenges and difficulties for families when responding to child sexual abuse
- Examples of how families protect their children from sexual abuse
- Examples of challenges for families to protect children from sexual abuse
- The role of males in terms of protecting children from sexual abuse
- The role of females in terms of protect children from sexual abuse

4. Opinions about families' responses to child sexual abuse in KwaNzimakwe

- Thoughts/feelings in regards to cases where the family do not report child sexual abuse.
- Thoughts/feelings about cases where child sexual abuse create a conflict in the family
- Thoughts/ feelings in regards to cases where adults in the family blame the child for the sexual abuse
- Thoughts and feelings about cases where the perpetrator is still around in the community
- Thoughts and feelings about cases where families are threatened not to report incidences of child sexual abuse

5. Opinions about families' challenges to protect children from sexual abuse in KwaNzimakwe

- Thoughts and feelings about children being vulnerable to sexual abuse due to lack of adult supervision
- Thoughts and feelings about families not talking to children about child sexual abuse

6. Community members influence on families protection of children from child sexual abuse in KwaNzimakwe (represented by community members, tribal leaders, church leaders or traditional healers)

- Ways in which they have come in contact with cases of child sexual abuse
- Advice and/or assistance that they gave families in relation to child sexual abuse
- Views in terms of their role in relation to families and child sexual abuse

7. Opinions about possible ways to strengthen families 'protection of children from sexual abuse in KwaNzimakwe

- Ways that families' responses to child sexual abuse could improve and ways to make this a reality
- Ways that families' protection of children from sexual abuse could be strengthened and ways to make this a reality

Appendix D: Focus group guide in Zulu

1. Ukuhlukumezeka kwengane ngokocansi endaweni yaKwaNzimakwe

- Ithini imizwa noma imicabango yakho ngezingane ezithola ukuhlukumezeka ngokocansi
- Ungakunika incazelo ethini ukuhlukumezeka ngokocansi
- Ucabanga ukuthi iyini imbangela yokuhlukunyezwa kwengane ngokocansi

2. Imibono nge zehlakalo ezikhona zezingane ezihlukunyezwa ngokocansi KwaNzimakwe

- Ucabangani ngezingane ezihlukumeza ezinye ngokocansi
- Ucabangani ngezingane ezihlukunyezwa ngokocansi umzali
- Ucabangani ngengane ehlukunyezwa ngokocansi umuntu ehlala naye endlini
- Ucabangani ngengane ehlukunyezwa ngokocansi ilunga lomphakathi
- Ucabangani ngezingane ezingabafana nezingamantombazane ezihlukunyezwa ngokocansi

3. Iqhaza elingabanjwa yimindeni ekuvikeleni izingane ekuhlukunyezweni ngokocansi

- Izibonelo maqondana nendlela imindeni ephendula ngayo kwizehlakalo zokuhlukunyezwa ngokocansi kwengane
- Izibonelo zezinselelo nezingqinamba imindeni ebhekana nazo uma kufanele iphendule ekuhlukunyezweni kwengane ngokocansi
- Izibonelo ekuthini imindeni izivikela kanjani izingane ekuhlukunyezweni ngokocansi
- Izibonelo zezinselelo imindeni ebhekana nazo ekuvikeleni izingane ekuhlukunyezweni ngokocansi
- Iqhaza elibanjwa amadoda/ abesilisa ekuvikeleni izingane ekuhlukunyezweni ngokocansi
- Iqhaza elibanjwa ngomama/ abesifazane ekuvikeleni izingane ekuhlukunyezweni ngokocansi

4. Imibono yenu ngelezi zimpendulo ezinikezwa yimindeni magondana nengane ehlukunyeziwe ngokocansi

- Ucabangani maqondana nemindeni engabiki uma kukhona ingane ehlukunyezwe ngokocansi
- Ucabangani mayelana nezezhlakalo zokuhlukunyezwa kwezingane ngokocansi okudala ingxabano emndenini

- Umcabango wakho mayelana nezehlakalo lapho khona abantu abadala besola ingane ngokuthi ihlukunyeziwe ngokocansi
- Ucabangani ngesimo lapho khona umuntu ohlukumezile ingane ngokocansi etholakala ezikhululekele ehamba emphakathini sengathi akwenzekanga lutho
- Umcabango wakho mayelana sezimo lapho imindeni ithola ukusatshiswa ngokubika isehlakalo sengane ehlukezeke ngokocansi

5. Imibono maqondana nezinsalelo zemindeni ekuvikeleni izingane ekuhlukumezekeni ngokocansi

- Imizwa nemicabango yakho mayelana nezingane ezithola ukuhlukumezeka ngokocansi ngenxa yokuthi azinakiwe abantu abadala
- Imizwa nemicabango yakho mayelana nemindeni engakhulumi nezingane ngokuhlukumezeka ngokocansi ukuthi kusho ukuthini noma kuyini

6. Amalunga omphakathi anamthelela muni emindenini maqondana nokuvikela izingane ekuhlukumezekeni ngokocansi KwaNzimakwe (Amalunga, Ommphakathu, izinduna, abefundisi nabelaphi bendabuko

- Izindlela abazisebenzisile ukuxhumana nezingane ezihlukumezeke ngokocansi
- Izaluleko noma usizo abalunikeze imindeni oluhlobene nokuhlukumezeka kwengane ngokocansi
- Ungaphuwula uthini mayelana neqhaza abalibambile elithinta umndeni wengane ehlukezeke ngokocansi

7. Imibona mayelana nezindlela ezingasetshenziswa ukuqinisa imindeni ikwazi ukuvikela izingane ekuhlukunyezweni ngokocansi

- Indlela imindeni ephendula ngayo maqondana nodaba lokuhlukumezeka kwezingane ngokocansi ingenziwa ibengcono futhi nendlela engenziwa ngayo ukuze ibonakale njengento ephilayo noma ekhona
- Izindlela ezingasetshenziswa ukuqinisekisa ukuthi imindeni iyazivikela izingane ekuhlukumezekeni ngokocansi nezindlela zokwenza lokho kuphile

Appendix E: Informed consent for individual interviews in English

Title of the study: The role of families in protecting children from sexual abuse in KwaNzimakwe.

To: Whom it May Concern

My name is Maria Liggett and I work at Masakhane Community Care in KwaNzimakwe. I am currently registered as a Masters student at the School of Applied Human Sciences at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (Howard College). I am conducting a research study which focuses on:

1. What hinders and promotes families' in protecting their young children from sexual abuse?
2. What influences families' decisions about how they respond to child sexual abuse?

The hope is that this study will assist in guiding social workers, community workers etc. on how to work with families in relation to child sexual abuse. You have been identified by Masakhane as someone who has past experience of child sexual abuse. I therefore kindly invite you to participate in one in-depth interview, which will be utilised only for the purposes of this study. The interview will involve questions related to experiences within your family in responding to child sexual abuse. Participation in the interview is voluntary, and anonymity will be ensured in the research report. Permission is also requested for audio taping, which will be used by the researcher for record purposes only. All matters arising of current incidents of abuse will be reported in accordance with child protection procedures. I am aware that this is a sensitive topic and counselling services will therefore be available when required.

I _____ hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

Signature of participant

Date

Signature of Researcher

Date

Please feel free to contact us regarding any enquiries:

Researcher: M. Liggett Tel: 0766475741

Supervisor: M. Kasaram Tel: 0312607443

If you wish to obtain information on your rights as a participant, please contact Ms Phumelele Ximba, Research Office, UKZN, on 031 260 3587.

Appendix F: Informed consent for individual Interviews in Zulu

Igama lemfundo: Indima yomdeni ekuvikeleni izingani ezihlukunyezwa ngocansi KwaNzimakwe.

Igama lami uMaria Liggett, ngisebenza eMasakhane Community Care, KwaNzimakwe. Ngibhalisile ukwenza iMasters esikoleni seApplied Human Sciences eUniversity of KwaZulu-Natal (Howard College). Ngenza izifundo ezihlola lokhu okulandelayo:

1. Yini evimba imindeni ekukhuseleni izingane zabo ekuhlukunyezweni ngokocansi futhi yini engabasiza ekuzivikeleni kancono.
2. Yini egqugquzela izinqumo ezithathwa umndeni uma ingane seyihlukumeziwe ngokocansi?

Kuyithemba ukuthi lesifundo sizosiza ekuhlahleni indlela kononhlalakahle, kubasebenzi bomphakathi, njalo ekuthini basebenzisana kanjani nemindeni ethintekayo ekuhlukunyezweni kwezingane ngokocansi. Ngakho ke ngokuzithoba ngikumema ukuba udlale indima ekuphenduleni imibuzo unikeze lonke ulwazi onalo oluzusetshenziswa maqondana nalesifundo kuphela. Lenhlolovo izohlanganisa imibuzo ehlobene nokuthinteka, nendlela umndeni othatha ngayo lendaba yokuhlukumezeka kwengane ngokocansi. Awuphoqekile ukuba ingxenye yokubuzwa nokuphendulwa kwalemibuzo, kufanele uzikhethale wena futhi kuzoqinisekiswa ukuthi igama lakho alivezwa embikweni walocwaningo. Kucelwa nemvume yokuthatha umsindo wezwi ozosetshenziswa yilowu ocwaningayo ngenhloso yokuqopha kuphela. Zonke izinto ezivukayo eziyizehlakalo ezikhona ezinthinta ukuhlukumezeka ziyobikwa ngokumaqondana nezinqubo mgomo yokuvikeleka komntwana. Ngiyazi ukuthi lesihloko sivusa imizwa yokudabuka nokuphatheka kabi noma amanxeba yingakho kuzobe kutholakala ukuthi umuntu alashwe ngokomqondo nomphefumulo uma kubonakala ukuthi kuyakudingeka lokhu.

Mina _____ngiyaqinisekisa ukuthi ngiyayiqonda yonke imibhalo ekhona kuleliphepha nokuthi ucwaningo luvela kuphi futhi ngiyavuma ukuba yinxenye yalolucwaningo.

Ngiyaqonda ukuthi ngikhululekile ukuhoxa ekubeni yingxenye yalomsebenzi noma nini uma ngizwa sengathi angisathandi.

Obuzwayo _____

Usuku _____

Umcwaningi _____

Usuku _____

Mayelana nanoma eyiphi imibuzo ongabanayo ungasithinta kulezinombolo ezilandelayo:

Umcwaningi: M. Liggett, Tel 076 6475 741

Umphathi: M. Kasaram, Tel: 031 2607 443

Uma ufuna ukuthola imininingwane ethile mayelana namalungelo akho njengomuntu obeyingxenye yalocwaningo, sicela uthinte u Ms Phumelele Ximba, ehovisi locwaningo, e_UKZN kulenombolo: 031 2603 587.

Appendix G: Informed consent form for focus group discussions in English

Title of the study: The role of families in protecting children from sexual abuse in KwaNzimakwe.

To: Whom it May Concern

My name is Maria Liggett and I work at Masakhane Community Care in KwaNzimakwe. I am currently registered as a Masters student at the School of Applied Human Sciences at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (Howard College). I am conducting a research study which focuses on families' and community leaders' views on the role of families in protecting young children from sexual abuse in KwaNzimakwe

The hope is that this study will assist in guiding social workers, community workers etc. on how to work with families in relation to child sexual abuse. I kindly invite you to participate in focus group interviews, which will be utilised only for the purposes of this study. The interview will involve group discussion in relation to families and child sexual abuse. The interview is voluntary, and anonymity will be ensured in the research report. Permission is also requested for audio taping, which will be used by the researcher for record purposes only. All matters arising of current incidents of abuse will be reported in accordance with child protection procedures. I am aware that this is a sensitive topic and counselling services will therefore be available when required.

I _____ hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

Signature of participant

Date

Signature of Researcher

Date

Please feel free to contact us regarding any enquiries:

Researcher: M. Liggett Tel: 0766475741

Supervisor: M. Kasaram Tel: 0312607443

If you wish to obtain information on your rights as a participant, please contact Ms Phumelele Ximba, Research Office, UKZN, on 031 260 3587.

Appendix H: Informed consent form for focus group discussions in Zulu

Igama lemfundo: Indima yomdeni ekuvikeleni izingani ezihlukunyezwa ngocansi KwaNzimakwe.

Igama lami uMaria Liggett, ngisebenza eMasakhane Community Care, KwaNzimakwe. Ngibhalisile ukwenza iMasters esikoleni seApplied Human Sciences eUniversity of KwaZulu-Natal (Howard College). Ngenza izifundo ezihlola lokhu okulandelayo:

1. Yini evimba imindeni ekukhuseleni izingane zabo ekuhlukunyezweni ngokocansi futhi yini engabasiza ekuzivikeleni kancono.
2. Yini egqugquzela izinqumo ezithathwa umndeni uma ingane seyihlukumeziwe ngokocansi?

Kuyithemaba ukuthi lesifundo sizosiza ekuhlahleni indlela kononhlalakahle, kubasebenzi bomphathi, njalo njalo ekuthini basebenzisana kanjani nemindeni ethintekayo ekuhlukunyeneni kwezingane ngokocansi. Ngakho ke ngokuzithoba nginimema ukuba nidlale indima ekuphenduleni imibuzo ninikeze lonke ulwazi eninalo oluzusetshenziswa maqondana nalesifundo kuphela. Nizohlangana nibeyiqembu nixoxisana ngalokhu. Lenhlolovo izohlanganisa imibuzo ehlobene nokuthinteka, nendlela umndeni othatha ngayo lendaba yokuhlukumezeka kwengane ngokocansi. Aniphoqekile ukuba ingxenye yokubuzwa nokuphendulwa kwalemibuzo, kufanele nizikhethale nina, futhi kuzoqinisekiswa ukuthi amagama enu akavezwa embikweni walocwaningo. Kucelwa nemvume yokuthatha umsindo wamazwi ozosetshenziswa yilowu ocwaningayo ngenhloso yokuqopha kuphela. Zonke izinto ezivukayo eziyizehlakalo ezikhona ezinthinta ukuhlukumezeka ziyobikwa ngokumaqondana nezinqubo mgomo yokuvikeleka komntwana. Ngizazi ukuthi lesihloko sivusa imizwa yokudabuka nokuphatheka kabi noma amanxeba yingakho kuzobe kutholakala ukuthi umuntu alashwe ngokomqondo nomphefumulo uma kubonakala ukuthi kuyakudingeka lokhu.

Mina _____ ngiyaqinisekisa ukuthi ngiyayiqonda yonke imibhalo ekhona kuleliphepha nokuthi ucwaningo luvela kuphi futhi ngiyavuma ukuba yinxenye yalolucwaningo.

Ngiyaqonda ukuthi ngikhululekile ukuhoxa ekubeni yingxenye yalomsebenzi noma nini uma ngizwa sengathi angisathandi.

Obuzwayo _____

Usuku _____

Umcwaningi _____

Usuku _____

Mayelana nanoma nemibuzo ongabanayo ukusithinta kulezinombolo ezilandelayo:

Umcwaningi: M. Liggett, Tel 076 6475 741

Umphathi: M. Kasaram, Tel: 031 2607 443

Uma ufuna ukuthola imininingwane ethile mayelana namalungelo akho njengomuntu obeyingxenye yalocwaningo, sicela uthinte u Ms Phumelele Ximba, ehovisi locwaningo, e_UKZN kulenombolo: 031 2603 587.

Appendix I: Permission to conduct research

22 March 2012

The Project Co-ordinator
Masakhane Community Care
PO BOX 66132 Munster
4278 KZN

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH STUDY AT MASAKHANE COMMUNITY CARE

I am a Masters student registered at the School of Applied Human Sciences at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. I seek permission to conduct a research study with the clients of Masakhane, focusing particularly on families with past experiences of child sexual abuse. The main aim of the study is to understand families' roles in protecting children from sexual abuse.

The research will provide key recommendations for preventative services with families in relation to child sexual abuse. The study aims to particularly study child sexual abuse within the context of a disadvantaged community such as KwaNzimakwe.

Maria Liggett
Researcher

Lindiwe Hlophe
Masakhane Project Co-ordinator

Appendix J: Ethical Clearance



23 August 2012

Mrs Maria Liggett 212556940
School of Applied Human Sciences

Dear Mrs Liggett

Protocol reference number: HSS/0779/012M
Project title: The role of families in protecting young children from sexual abuse in KwaNzimakwe.

EXPEDITED APPROVAL

I wish to inform you that your application has been granted Full Approval through an expedited review process:

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the school/department for a period of 5 years.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully


Professor Steven Collings (Chair)
/pm

cc Supervisor: Prof M Kasiram
cc Academic Leader: Prof Johanna Hendrina Buitendach
cc School Admin. Mrs Doreen Hattingh

Professor S Collings (Chair)
Humanities & Social Sc Research Ethics Committee
Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building
Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban, 4000, South Africa
Telephone: +27 (0)31 260 3587/8350 Facsimile: +27 (0)31 260 4609 Email: ximbap@ukzn.ac.za / snymanm@ukzn.ac.za
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